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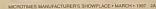




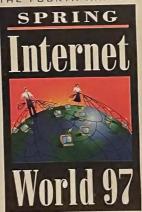








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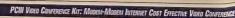


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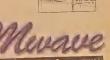


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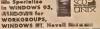
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BY PAUL HOFFMAN

Industry Insights

Internet In The Schools: This Year's Challenge

The speed

of the Internet's growth is also the speed of the Internet's hype machine. Having already burned out most of the possible "hot" topics for the Internet in the past two years (multimedia, intranets, commerce), the Internet industry has found the great mom-and-apple-pie Internet topic for 1997; the Internet in public schools.

However, the industry is approaching this very important topic as superficially as it has most of the other topics, and schools may not

1997 maybe the year we start seriously thinking about getting the Internet into our schools, but it won't be the year that we succeed.

The "schools on the Internet" theme goes President Bill Clinton has embraced wring public schools = major feel-good platform for 1997 He is even suggesting a tax that would go to pay for Internet assessed his schools. Internetrelated companies and donating equipment and encouraging their staffs to volunteer in regional school-wiring projects throughout the country.

These efforts are a well and good, but they are just the start. So far, few of the much-publicized efforts have addressed the very real problems of Internet access in the schools, and given how poorly the US treats its public educa-

IN INCRUTINES - MARCH 5, 1997

tion system, these problems are likely in fester for years until smart entrepreneurs or enlightened state governments fix them.

It Takes More Than Wife

Most of the efforts that have been announced on the national and local levels fall into two categories: wiring classrooms and providing Internet connectivity to wired schools. Both of these tasks are certainly needed before kids in our schools can start using the Internet in their classrooms, but they was not enough to actually make the Internet useful except to the smartest kids, or kids in classrooms with the most

Internet-savvy teachers. Wiring classrooms for the Internet is no more useful than plopping a PC on a corporate user's desk and saying, "Here, use this."

In fact, wiring classrooms ignores a very

important point: Many schools don't have classroom computers capable of accessing the Internet. This isn't to say that classrooms shouldn't be wired until the schools have the money to buy the computers; in fact, its a very good first step Because school budgets are so tight, they need to buy equipment that will do their tasks for five to ten years, and an Internetready computer from five years ago wouldn't be able to run any of today's Internet software.

Many schools have a significant theft problem, so even if they could afford to buy a computer for each classroom, they might not be able to keep those computers for very long.

Smart manufacturers will start selling low-cost computers that are hard to steal (the case must be easy mu chain to a wall or desk, it must be easily etched or branded with the school's name, and the RAM and CPU must be soldered to the motherboard to prevent chip theft), and they will probably have quite a large market in both the public and private schools.

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As many companies with intranets have discovered, you need much more than hardware to run a local network. Even if the teachers are trained how to use the computers in their rooms, someone must maintain the networks in the schools. Budgets for school administration have been eviscerated just as fast as budgets for teachers and supplies, so it will be difficult to find anyone with the time to become the local sysadmin even if there is the money to train them. Technical volunteer groups will help, and maybe even take the brunt of the load, but it is folly to think that a network in any organization like a school or company can run itself.

Making The Internet Useful In Schools

So far, computers in the schools have proven themselves to be a boon in reducing kids' fears about technology and preparing them for computer use in the future. Given that an incredible number of parents are still afraid of computers. reducing kids' fears is an admirable cause. However, you don't need an Internet connec ROM drive is probably sufficient, and most teachers can learn to use those well as the were of us can

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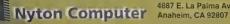
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The Internet brings a completely different set of features to a computer, however, and these have so far been ignored by the people trumpeting 1997 as the year of the Internet in the classroom. Understanding what the Internet is, where its resources are, what kind of information you'll find there, what the pitfalls are, and so on, is completely different from understanding what a computer is and how to run it Students and teachers both need to be trained in using the Internet before it will be of any value to them So far, few of the companies who are offering to help wire schools have offered to help with ongoing teacher training and providing educational materials for kids

Wiring classrooms for the Internet is no more useful than plopping a PC on a corporate user's desk and saying, "Here, use this."

The problem of what to do after a schooltoom is wired goes much beyond training, howwert. To date, there a almost no Internet support software available that is aimed at classtoom use. For example, most parents would not
be happy if they found out that a free telephone
has been put in the classroom and that kids
could receive calls from anyone without the
teacher knowing about it. Nor would they be
happy to find out that their kids could get
copies of any book or magazine in their classtoom without the teacher knowing what they
had ordered. However, this is precisely the situattion with today's Internet.

There is a small amount of software available that prevents kids from getting to particular Web sites, but it is completely inadequate for what we expect from our schools. This "censorware" only prevents kids from getting to sites with material deemed "bad" by its creators. It does nothing to let the teacher see what is being requested, it does nothing to reduced kids who try to go to a banned site to a better one, and it covers only the World Wide Web, not email. Nevertheless, gullible school districts are buyling the software without understanding much about it because they think they have to do "something" in order to protect themselves legally, not in order to help

the teachers and kids

What we need, then, is front-end software to help teachers help the students use the internet This goes well beyond making the Internet casy; it must also include making it appropriate. So far, 'appropriate' has been limited to censoring Web sites, and this kind of prevention # clearly

not enough. It is not difficult in create software that channels kids of different ages towards different sites, or that gives different features based on age and skill. It is also not difficult to create software that lets teachers review incoming and outgoing email, maybe also suggesting good mailing lists.





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Industry Insights continued

What Teachers And Librarians Already Know

In California, teachers get a fair amount of computer-specific training which means that many teachers already understand a lot about the Internet. One thing that any teacher understands is that what is good for second graders isn't good for seventh graders. Sure, the wires coming into the classroom are the same for both, but the software used on the computers (and maybe even the computers themselves) need to be very different.

Makers of educational software understand how to differentiate by age, but makers of Internet software haven't: All the software is for adults, which means 14 and up fplus smarter elementary school kids). Even if a student can figure out how to use the World Wide Web for research, they can't necessarily understand the context of the Information they find, Most kids understand that things they find in a school library are probably more applicable to their work than things they find in the adult section of the public library—will they understand which information they find on the Web is appropriate?

Most kids understand that things they find in a school library are probably more applicable to their work than things they find in the adult section of the public library—will they understand which information they find on the Web is appropriate?

One of the reasons we have librarians in to decide what doesn't go into libraries. A librarian would know not to add a book that declares that the Holocaust didn't happen to the collection of a school library, even if the book was donated. He or she would probably also think twice about buying a book about notition that was full of advertising for a particular brand of food. A student coming across Web sites with this kind of information doesn't have the benefit of a librarian's discretion.

Recognizing The Beginning

1997 may be the year we start seriously thinking about getting the Internet Into our schools, but it won't be the year that we succeed. A decade ago, when the first practical CD-ROM drives became available, everyone predicted that the revolution was at hand. Instead, it took over five years for there to be many reasonably useful CD-ROM titles and the standards for quality are still very low.

In order for the Internet to be useful in the classroom, there has to IW much we to have better software for kids, but more importantly we have we have much better software for keachers. Bandwidth and access are a good place to start, but they re useless (or possibly even dangerous) without content for the desired audience. Given the pathetic way we fund public education in the US getting anything useful out of the writes we're laying in the classroom might take much longer than we expect.

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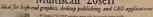
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Cleaning Your Hard Drive

Two New Tools That Complete The Work That Windows 95 Explorer Only Begins

While Windows

95 and the Internet have widened our horizons, they have also filled up our hard drives with huge files and created a need to be able to sort through and remove the unnecessary files that are accumulated. Turbo Browser, from Pacific Gold Coast, is a landmark product that does what the Windows 95 Explorer should do. It is close to amazing and definately belongs on your hard drive if you are frustrated with Windows 95 at not being able to figure out just what some of those files are

At first glance, Tutbo Browser looks much like Explorer. Your computer and its drives show up on the left side of the screen. When you click on a folder, the files and subdirectories inside the folder are displayed to the right. And you can move files around the drive you are exploring just like in the Explorer program that comes with Windows 95. But that is just the beginning.

The most dramatic feature of Turbo Browser is that when you click on a file, its contents are shown in a preview window at either the side or the bottom of the screen—it is your choice. So, when you browse down a series of files, you instantly examine their contents in the preview window. If it is an audio file, you can hear the contents. If it is a video file, you can see the video. If it is a page downloaded from the Web, you will see that page as if it were in the Web. You can then delete, export, move, and compress files as well as convert graphics files into other graphics formats.

Turbo Browser's strength does not stop there.

however. Its search capabilities ma also great. You can, at the outset, set filters to help you find just the files you are interested in. For instance, you can elect to look only at document files. A drop-down menu will let you select the format you want. I chose Ami Pro and all the files except the ones that have 'sam" m the extension were filtered out. From this point you can filter further by also choosing another set of limiting factors, such as ranges of size, date, or even text strings. So, for instance, I searched an old archived floppy disk of recipes to see if I could find the great recipe that Mrs. Parrott gave me for canning zucchini rinds Lo-and-behold, I found it in a few seconds.

You can choose to see the files we your hard drive organized in any way you want



Turbo Browser is so POWERFUL you will have to study the manual to learn ALL of the capabilities of the product.

from small icons all the way to detailed lists. If you organize the list by date, clicking on the date title wall rewerse the order of the date from oldest to newest at the top. Likewise, if you organized by name, you can reverse the order by simply clicking on the name field.

Turbo Browser lets you find files quickly and easily and then manipulate them any way you like. You can move files into bins and then treat the bins with a single click. For instance, you can select files from all over your hard drive and then with a single click move them onto a

floppy disk. You can compress and uncompress files just me easily and you can view compressed files with a single mouse click. You can easily transfer files from one removable media me another. This means you can effortlessly copy files from one Zip disk me another.

The power of this program # conmous. For under \$100 you can finally have an explorer program that doesn't frustrate you. Turbo Browser # = powerful you will have to study the manual to learn all of the capabilities of the product.

Communic page 22.

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I wish I could say that everything is perfect with this program. Unfortunately, there are bound to be glitches in any program with the level of complexity. I found it impossible to me whole files when they were made up of a text file to which new text was added and sawd under a new name. But Pacific Gold Coast indicates that they are aware of this—and other—problems and that they are working to cortect them all. Despite a few minor annoyances, I recommend this program without qualification.

Another program that attacks the same problem of cleaning up your hard drive to make = \$\square\$ space is DiskMapper from Micro Logic a company perhaps better known for InfoSelect DiskMapper is easy to install and lets you graphically \$\square\$ what \$\square\$ on your hard drive and the size of each file and directory. It begins with a representation of the hard drive with rectangles representing each directory. The rectangles are \$\square\$ direct proportion to the \$\square\$ of the directory. Within the directory, you can see files and subdirectories and so forth down five levels Clicking on one of the \$\square\$ will show you details of the space.

At first, I could not quite figure out why this approach was good, but as I worked with DiskMapper I discovered its strength. First, it



gives you a very quick picture of what is taking up hard drive space, shows you the title of the area, and lets you delve, through clicks of the mouse, as deeply as you like Secondly, it lets you delete, compress, uncompress, launch, and get information on what you are examining You can, for instance, click an an application and learn the basics of the program including when it was installed. If you are curious about a text file, a double click will display that file even though you are not in the applica-

Like the other products from Micro Logic, you can configure this program to look any way you want. Furthermore, you was change the criteria for highlighting files. You can, for instance, tell the program to graphically display files organized by how long it has been since you

last accessed them. Another option lets you see the map in terms of all extension. You can jump to Windows 95 Explorer by hitting a button in the toolbar.

DiskMapper is another powerful program. If you have not kept your hard drive clean and are now running out of space, it may be worth fifty bucks to get this program. As they say, it is cheaper than a new hard drive.

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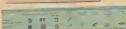
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HE SHE HATTE - BY PETER JOHN HARRISON

Video Conferencing Systems

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One of the

disadvantages of today's modern workplace is that it often is not one place, but several. These days it is common to have not only branch offices, marketing organizations, and research and development labs in different locations, but also individual telecommuters spread across a wide range of geographic locations. This is fine from the point of view of the computers, which do not care if the other computers on the LAM are not me the room with them, but people do not work the same way. For us humans, face-to-face discussions are always the preferred method of communication.

The process of gathering people together unto a single location when they work in different locations, even different time zones, is loconvenient time-consuming, and expensive. As a solution, many companies have "video conferencing centers," which allow groups of people at one location to visually meet with a group of people somewhere else.

to scheduling a video conferencing room. The other problem is that these centers are usually impractical for smaller offices and telecommuters—this is unfortunate because these are the very people that need them the most. What small-office users and telecommuters really need is individual, desktop video conferencing tools that allow people to spontaneously meet with one another and share information and documents online.

Until a few years ago video conferencing was not a practical alternative for smaller business locations or telecommuters. Not only was the equipment costly, but the "bandwidth" requirements for sending and receiving audio and video data were significantly more than most small offices and telecommuters had. Recently, however, a combination of technological advances and changes in equipment pricing data of the processing that the processing that the processing the processing that the

The most obvious of these advances has come to the telecommunications market, where faster modems and most particularly breed of analog modem, working in concert with an ISDN line and special ISDN requipment at the other end of the connection, can connect at speeds of 56Kbps. That is much faster than standard analog-to-analog modems, which often have to fall back to speeds of £4Kbps (even if the box says 33.6Kbps).

Compression technology has improved, too Fast as the new moderns and ISDN lines are they still fall short of the bandwidth required to send uncompressed audio and video over the same connection. Uncompressed, a worse relephone call requires 56kbps of bandwidth 50 in order to get the audio and video signals to fit inside the bandwidth of a modern or ISDN connection, you have to compress it. This is where newer, faster CPUs have come im handy—they have the horsepower and robust compression tools needed to reduce complex real-time audio and video feeds into a compact format.

Of course you cannot have a video conferencing system without a camera. It used in the hat desktop video required both a video camera and an expensive video capture card, neither of which were cheap. These days you can buy video cameras that simply plug into a PC printer is Mac serial port, making installation a real no-brainer, even on a laptop. But the best thing about them is their price. A black-and white Connectix QuickCam costs just \$100 of so, and Connectix and other companies have color units that are just as easy to use that retail for \$200 to \$350.

The only thing left is software. With the cost of video conferencing systems having been to high, you might also expect video conferencing software to be expensive. But thanks to Cornel University that has not happened. A few years ago Cornell was experimenting with video

What small office users and telecommuters *really* need is individual, desktop video conferencing tools that allow people to spontaneously meet with one another and share information and documents online.

There are two problems with video conferencing centers. One is that most of a company's meetings, and discussions occur spontaneously, when people drop by # neighbor's work space to ask advice, ## activity that does not lend itself ## MECHARIAS - MARCH 5 1995

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conferencing as a way "to stimulate creative thinking and create a wide base of user experience." Their goal was to create a video conferencing tool that was affordable and easy to use. The fruit of their effort was CU-SeeMe, a very basic video conferencing package for Internet users. And it was-and still is-free. When combined with the inexpensive black-and-white QuickCam, that meant that Internet users could set up a video conferencing system for about a hundred bucks. CU-SeeMe caught on like wild fire.

The problem is that the free version of CU-SeeMe does not have very robust compression built in to it, so it does not work well over slower network connections. It does not, for example, work well on dial-up modem or even "IB" ISDN connections, so it is not a good choice for companies that need to conserve precious bandwidth between locations. That has opened the door for several commercial software makers to design products that do work with slower network and direct-dialed modern connections, but because they still have to compete with CU-SeeMe's low price tag, they are not very expensive.

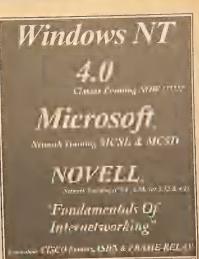
Most of these products provide decent quality audio and a color viewing window that refreshes one to four times per second using a standard dial-up modem connection into a LAN or the Internet. At these lower frame rates the view looks more like a series of rapid-fire snapshot photos than a living, breathing person, but you still get a good idea of the expressions he or she is using. There is also a short delay between the time you speak and when your listener hears you on the other end. The result is similar to the time lag you get with some long-distance international calls, which can be somewhat

There are ways to cut the time lag. A direct-dial connection to the location where you want to talk to is faster than connecting through the Internet. Using an ISDN connection also speeds things up. But if You are looking for a way to save money as well as improve the audio/video response, you might try simply changing the camera you use. Black-and-white cameras not only cost less, they use less band-

What I found most annoying about the products I tested was not # Ptoblem with the software or the speed of my connection, but with my computer's sound card. Inexpensive sound cards usually are "halfduplex," meaning they cannot record and reproduce sound at the same time. Half-duplex is great for video games and replaying audio sequences, but it prevents you from interjecting comments into a conversation while someone else is talking, which adds an unnatural feeling to the discussion. Buying a quality "full-duplex" sound card is probably a good investment for a video conferencing desktop setup.

Other hardware needs include a fast computer—most Windowscompatible packages suggest ■ 100Mhz Pentium or better—and a serial (if you own a Mac) or printer port that you can dedicate to the digital camera. For network users that print to a network printer, that may hot be an issue, but if you have a printer or other parallel port device, a simple A/B switch or second printer port card will allow you to connect both devices.

One more nice thing about desktop video conferencing packages is that you do not have to buy them to try them. Many vendors have limtled. time-out versions available for download via the Internet, so you can compare each product's ease-of-use and audio and video quality



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before you buy. (See the Resources list below for information about hardware and software vendors.) Trying each product will also give you a chance to look at add-on features, like shared "white board" drawing spaces, "Video Answering Machines," and multi-point video conferencing with more than two participants.

Before you buy, you should also consider which product(s) your business associates or friends already own. Since none of these products currently use the same signaling and communication techniques, you will need to have matching products if you want to link up with them.

Video conferencing packages are a great tool when you want to talk with a colleague or friend in another city or state, but I think they can be even more useful to telecommuters and other remote workers. In a world where "out-of-site" frequently also means "forgotten," video conferencing can provide a way for remote workers to keep them selves in view and in the loop. It is also nice, from time to time, to see a friendly face. After all, as a stay-at-home worker myself, the only faces I have seen all day are the ones that have popped up on my video display.

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What It Takes To Succeed With Telecommuting

Findings From The Latest
American Telecommuting Association Survey

A comprehensive

survey of companies with active telecommuter programs has revealed a pattern strongly associated with success in adapting to this new way of working. According to the survey just published by the American Telecommuting. Association, only a few organizations have written off the dies of telecommuting or have bad severe problems making it work. Most have found great success with telecommuting. More importantly, the survey found that the firms reporting the most satisfaction and success with their telecommuters also had four or more of the following elements in place.

Designated "Champion" Telecommuting

Many (fines, a company's "champion of telecommuting"—the de factor expert and advo-cate—a appointed to the role by upper management. But it is important to remember that some very successful champions have been volunteers who simply wanted to increase the number of telecommuters within their organizations.

However he or she may originally get the responsibility, though, the champion usually plays a critically important part with the success and future proliferation of telecommuting with in the organization.

Many volunteer champions

of telecommuting began by tentatively experimenting with working at home. When they experience a modicum of success, they eagerly tell everyone who will listen how great the arrangement is working out for them. Soon, the organization's managers and potential telecommuters are continually seeking them out for answers and opinions in telecommuting.

Other telecommuting champiions prefer to concentrate more on conducting thorough searches through books, newsletters, reports, studies, and other materials, trying to educate themselves about the details and the overall sweep of telecommuting possibility. As word gets around, others begin coming to the champion for advice, support, and corroboration to management of the benefits to be obtained through increased telecommuting

The most important work of the telecommuting champion within an organization, however, is to keep the ball rolling when others who have been hot for the idea

ATTENTION: TELECOMMUTING LAWYERS

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For purposes of this study, a telecommuting lawyer is defined as one who works for pay from his or her home on a regular basis, even though he or she also has an office outside the home. Lawyers who work from home only on evenings, weekends, and days off are not to be counted at telecommuters at this study.

Participation in the study can be anonymous, if you wish, and will provide invaluable assistance in the Committee's and the ABA's efforts to educate legal employers about the advantages of telecommuting, both for themselves and for the telecommuters.

For more information on how to participate, contact Nicole Belson Goluboff, 750 Kappock St., #905, Riverdale, NY, 10463, (718)548-0940

The most important work of the telecommuting champion within an organization, however, is to keep the ball rolling when others who have been hot for the idea suddenly begin to blow cold.

suddenly begin to blow cold. Anyone with experience in organizational decision-making and politics knows that the pendulum regularly swings between these two temperatures, and that the lack of heat—however temporary—can

freeze im even kill any fledgling program that lacks a natural constituency to support it.

By continuing push the idea and the practice of telecommuting during these "dark" times, a telecommuting champion keep the

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Telecommuting and much

number of telecommuters growing toward the to "take off" within the organization.

- Clear And Measurable Objectives For Telecommuters

Regardless of the work actually done by

telecommuters, the survey shows that companies most satisfied and successful with this most way of working tend to be those that consistently evaluate telecommuters' performance on the basis of written, specific objectives

Most times, these written objectives was projected-oriented, Individually negotiated and her supervisor. But in a growing number of instances, the written objectives are longerterm, and form a permanent part of the telecommuter's job description.

Either way, they allow supervisors of how effectively the individual is performing without physically seeing them in action eight hours a day, five days a week. Written objectives also have the benefit of helping telecommuters feel sure they are delivering precisely what the organization is expecting, despite working at a distance from the central office

Clear Policies And Procedures

Whether or not registration, training, and monttoring of telecommuters were centralized with in the organization, the companies that reported themselves most satisfied with telecommuting were those that had developed and published a set of policy and procedure guidelines for all telecommuters to follow.

These guidelines generally cover such liverse topics as:

- Training parameters for telecommuters
- · Reporting requirements of telecommuters
- · The individual's and the organization's responsibilities for equipment and office furniture needed for telecommuting
- · Present and future commitments of the organization to its relecommuters, and of the telecommuter to the organization.

Clear guidelines make the telecommuting experience more uniform for everyone working this way within a single organization. They also provide people working as telecommuters the same kind of solid basis for expectations and requirements that people working within the central office have long enjoyed.

- Flexibility

An important trait for almost every business nearly in the time, flexibility becomes particularly important when conventional employees become telecommuters and begin functioning outside the relatively controlled conditions of the central office. This is because teleconmuters regularly experience unusual and relatively unpredictable situations, demands on their time, and personal preferences. These Can include anything from a power outage, to the need to care for a sick child sent home from



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Hapless Gets Religion

(And Figures Out The Intranet)

For a while

now, our perennial friend Hapless has felt pushed around.

Hapless works for a big company, and like many people at big companies, he spends most of his day working on one computer or another. Ten years ago when Hapless started this job, the company was a lot was all VINE "mint-computer" was a UNIX "mint-computer he shared with thirty other users. The computer listelf was in another building in a locked room to which Hapless did not have the key. His only link to the computer was the may terminal at his deak.

When Hapless started his job, he knew the basics of DOS and writually nothing about UNIX. At first the UNIX computer befuddled him, and he was on the verge of quirtung. However, a chance meeting with an odd group of UNIX experts in an Emeryville cafe (now sadly defunct) piqued his Interest in awk and the many other strange utilities UNIX had to offer.

Hapless took the initiative, figured = few things out for himself, and without any formal training, became == expert UNIX user A few years later, his prowess was revisited all work when = UNIX workstation was installed in his cube, and Hapless was, for a while, in neaven

Things took a turn for the worse in 1993, when downsizing caught up with Hapless. He kept bis job, but found his UNIX workstation replaced with a PC.

The PC did at the things Hapless needed to do, but it the considerably less tun to use. Hapless coped, his interest fueled now less by UNIX than by the Internet.

Time passed, and gradually UNIX computers crept back into the environment, and throughout 1996, Hapless had both # PC and a UNIX workstation in his office. This was # mixed blessing. The two machines did not work well together. In the course of # normal work day. Hapless spent # lot of time sweeling from one environment to the other. In December, he was rewarded with a new chair.

Hapless couldn't possibly have articulated the significance of this event, but he understood perfectly well that on the screen in front of him was prototype of something that would make his life at

work mare bearable.

Paradigm Shift

And then one recent morning, Hapless found himself in a dull telephone conversation with a co-worker three timezones away. The co-worker needed a draft of a presentation Hapless was working on The presentation was in PowerPoint, but is the modern world, binary files (such as PowerPoint presentations) are really pretty easy to send up.

you could just, uh, put it up on a Web server somewhere?"

Ever mistrustful of trends, Hapless was something of an Internet eurmudgeon, and his first response was not a Chartable one did his co-worker not understand how email worked. To ask for an alternative to email seemed like nothing less than lazy-mindedness.

Fortunately, Hapless kept his mouth the until a second response materialized He would seed the response materialized He would send the email and put the presentation of a Web server Hapless provided the necessary URL The co-worker breathed a sigh of reset and hung up.

This Web thing, he thought, is fine principle, but creating HTML pages is awfully label intensive. Furthermore, Hapless found that whenever he sat down to build a Web site for one of his computers, there was nothing he wished to say to the disembodied audience that might be cruising the internal Web at the big company he worked for.

Intraners' (that is, the use of Internet tedinology on a local network for purely local obes' was) seemed to Happless, like an extremous boundeggle, a way for companies with own mercial internet products to tread water unit they figured out a way in make money on the Internet Isoff.



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Solutions .

UNIX continued.

All these reservations aside, Hapless set out to publish the presentation as he had promised. He made a directory beneath his Web server's document root. He moved the presentation in this directory, and he added a link to the Web

server's home page that led to that directory. He started a browser and his UNIX workstation and pointed at the PC's Web server. He followed the newly installed link to the directory containing his presentation.

And everything changed.

From his UNIX workstation, Hapless was looking at a listing of the contents of a directory on his PC.

At that exact moment. Hapless couldn't possibly have articulated the

significance of this event, but he understood perfectly well that on the screen in front of him was a prototype of something that would make his life at work more bearable.

Without thinking much about it, he began

tinkering with the Web servers on both his machines. He found that both Web servers would allow him in associate a URL (or name) with a directory anywhere in the computer that hosted the Web server

grams) the Internet An URL for a Web paslooks something like the following http://au. dnat.com/-bfalk/index html

This URL consists of three parts: a protocal identifier ("http:") which indicates a resource

controlled by a Web err, the name of a competer that hosts the fling flow URL points to These dnat.com?, and a path name to a specific to source on that compute ("-b/palkindex_html").

When an URL points to a resource controlled by a Web server, the path name part of the URL rep

resents the actual location of a file or directory relative to the Web server's document roof directory.

When a Web server receives an URL that points to a directory, it looks first for an HTML

Now, from a single Wall page, he could navigate to files and directories on either machine.

And of course, it made no difference whether he read this page from a Web browser on his PC or on his workstation, or on some other machine entirely.

A Short Course In Infrastructure

"URL" is an acronym for Uniform Resource Locator, the string that is used to identify and locate things (usually files, directories, or pro-





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UNIX rantinued from page

page that is designated as the default index to the directory's contents.

If there is no default HTML page for a directory, the Web server figures
out what's in the directory and returns a list of the directory's contents.

Hapless discovered that a Web server would allow URLs to point to things outside the server's document root directory. Such URLs are sometimes called "pseudo-URLs" because the pathname portion of a pseudo-URL is just a logical name, and may not reveal the location of the resource that the URL names.

One common pseudo-URL is the use of the name "cgi-bin" to point to a directory containing programs that can be invoked by the common gateway interface (CGI). Storing these programs outside the Web server's regular document hierarchy as part of good Web site security.

Hapless realized that the mapping of names to directories wasn't limited to egi-bin, and on his PC's Web server he quickly mapped out ownes that pointed to the machine's system disk (drive C.), its auxillary disk (drive D.), and its CD-ROM drive.

He built a single HTML page containing pointers to these names, and when he tested it, he found that from this one Web page he could an anigate (via a Web browser) through the filesystems on all the drives to which he'd assigned names.

Hapless turned to his UNIX workstation and did more or less the same thing. He configured its Web server to associate URIX with the workstation's system disk, with his home directory, and with the machine's second hard disk. He included URIX pointing to these directones in the HTML page he'd started am his PC.

Now, from a single Web page, he could navigate to files and directoties on either machine. And of course, it made no difference whether he read this page from a Web browser on his PC == on his workstanon, or on some other machine entirely. (Hapless travels == business a Beat deal these days and had come to resent the difficulty of accessing the files on his desktop machines over a dialup connection.)

Further Explorations

Hapless was clated. In less than half a day, he hall pieced together a mechanism that provided most of the integration he needed between his two computers, and he had done this on his own using! Web page-terrers that were already installed and adding only a single Web page.

The Intranet, Hapless thought, might have more possibilities than hed first thought. In a wave of enthusiasm, he began to imagine ways to extend the "platform independent directory browser" he had just built

His first project was to get a view of several directories in a single browser window. To do this, Hapless gave himself a quick orientation to HTML frames (an extension to HTML that Hapless had long pool-parties). HTML frames allow the browser display to be partitioned back pages.

Each partition for frame) can display a separate Web page.

Using frames turned out to be easier than Hapless expected, and
with a couple of hours work, he had built a satisfactory frame-based
page containing a Table of Contents and two frames for displaying
directories or other Michanger.

Not the thought of several utilities (like the company's electronic bhone book) that he wanted to be readily available. With a little mare work, Hapless constructed a CGI script that would allow him to





UNIX continued

submit simple phone book queries from a Web page. Then he built an HTML page that could be displayed in one of his directory browser's

After the CGI script for the phone book was working, Hapless started on a second CGI script (for email aliases), and realized that it was impractical to build separate frames for all the scripts he wanted access to

It was then that he recalled that one of his co-workers had recently implemented a "Go" button in JavaScript. The button was part of a form that contained a list of Web pages to jump to, Selecting an item from the list and clicking the button would cause the selected item to be loaded.

Hapless knew nothing about JavaScript, but he found the Web page his co-worker had published and copied It. He modified the Go button page to work within the frames he had created earlier. Soon he had added a tiny frame containing # Go button which dutifully loaded another frame with we HTML form for any of the various utilities that Hapless needed to run frequently.

When Hapless looked at the clock, he was surprised to find that it was nearly midnight The only sound he could hear was the nearby thump of wastebaskets as the janitor made his

It was then that he recalled that was of his co-workers had recently implemented a "Go" button in JavaScript. The button was part of a form that contained a list of Web

pages in jump to. Selecting an item from the list and clicking the button would cause the selected item to be loaded.

"Oh, what the hell Sure, why not?" the jan tor replied.

Hapless sat the janitor down, explained his problems with the two computers, and brought up the page of frames. He loaded one frame

with a directory from his PC. strated the Go button, the phone program and the email alias program. When he finished, he The janitor looked in him.

"Great," he said. "but what about security?"

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BY FABIAN PASCAL

PCMCIA Revisited

Support Still Not What It Should Be, But...

My last

column on motebook computers was a long time ago. As I predicted then, notebooks officially supported for OSI2 (let alone running it well) have become more difficult, not easier, to find. One of the weakestlinks has been PCMCIA support. But if and when you have or find a good OSI2 notebook; that's when PCMCIA on the desktop makes sense: Why have two fax modems, when both systems could share one card? Also, I find PCMCIA removable disks are more convenient for data:

exchange than the now popular ZIP drives, which are twice as expensive.

I looked into desktop
PCMCIA early on, but despite
senous efforts on my fand a
manufacturer's) p.a.t. I
couldn't make it work under
either OS/2 2.x or 3.x When I checked the
Warpb Driver Pak. CD. I foundshaw myroid desttop PCMCIA controller was certified OS/2 compauble by IBM. So I ured it again and promptly
rain into the exact imma problem as before Plug
and Play (PBAP) would recognize my Hayes
Optima 28 8 fax/modem card upon insertion,
but report errors and communications prostrains would not work with u.

Unfortunately, like its predecessors, Warp4 offers no help or documentation on PCMCIA installation and configuration. And when I logged a query with IBM support, there was no answer.

PCMCIA Installation

At the core of PCMCIA hardware is the con-

troller chipset—made by vendors like Intel or Cirrus Logic. Both notebook and desktop controllers are based on one.

Desktop PCMCIA hardware consists of three components: == 15A adapter, a floppy-like drive unit with the sockets, and a dual-ribbon cable connecting the two The installation is struightforward: Plug one end of the cable into the drive unit, fit the unit into one of the drive bays, plug the other end of the cable into the controller and insert into an ISA slot. That's ft.

Warp4 installation has a second, new hardware screen, from which PCMCIA support is the manufacurer or IBM, you must proceed by

You must also specify the kind of cards you!
be using—fax/modern, hard disk, or flash RAM
(there are no other options here—e.g. network
SCSI—yet you will find a few supported later in
the configuration stage)

Based on your choices, about 15MB worth of files are copied to the hard disk, the CONFIG-SYS file is updated and a Plug and Play (P&P) for PCMCIA folder is installed in the System Setup folder. With any card inserted in a socket, one high-pritched been immediately fol-

lowing the Warp logo indicates that P&P has recognized your PCM-CIA hardware.

If there is no beep try other selections from the list (you may also have to fool with the socket parameters

in the statements inserted in CONFIG.SYS) Unless P&P recognizes your hardware, nothing will work

I find PCMCIA removable disks are more convenient for data exchange than the now popular ZIP drives, which are twice as expensive.

installed (it is also part of Selective Install) You are given a list of supported RCMC19 hardware, from which as select yours. The list includes notebooks, desktop units (e.g. Databook) and chipsets, e.g. Intel's PCIC.

The first tricky part # if your notebook/desk-top drive is # on the list. This does not necessarily mean it won't work—wy desktop unit # oS/2 compatible. The problem at that the installation requires choosing # form the list, even # the CD Driver Pak deems your hardware compatible you need to figure # whether your equipment really is compatible, and if # which hard time is equivalent to yours, or on what chipset it is based! If this information is not in your products documentation and you cannot get if from

Card Recognition And Configuration

If you get a beep, there will be another one a few seconds later. A high-pitched one indicate card recognition and proper configuration by P&P, a low-pitched a means an unrecognized card or a card configuration problem

Click on the rainbow == in the P&F folder.
you'll see the sockets and the status of the
inserted cards. After a high beep, it should be
Ready, But my Optima card got a low beep
are stated in the display in Figure 1. The type was
serial and the status in, indicating that it was

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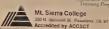
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recognized, but it was not Ready. Clicking on the Status icon, I found no IRQ and I/O address listed under Assigned Resources, a configuration problem.

This is the second tricky part. The online Help will only tell you what the screen displays, not what it means, or how to solve problems Search as you may the online documentation, you won't find anything on that either

PCMCIA cards are, basically, ISA devices: Each must use a unique

I/O address and interrupt level cards, like internal modems, come with their own serial port built in. which must also be assigned a COM port. OS/2 sup-



ports four COM ports via the COM.SYS driver, which assigns COM numbers in a specific way (see sidebar).

On notebooks with only one serial port, a PCMCIA modem will be set as standard COM2 and configuration problems are unlikely. But of ■ PC—desktop or notebook—with two serial ports, COM SYS will by to configure the third port, the modern card's, at the next address (35) COM3, for which there is no standard IRQ. It would be nice if it also cated any free IRQ to it (in my system, for example, 5.7,10,12, or 14 but it does not—the card is simply not configured, hence the unas signed resources.

Moreover, while OS/2 PCMCIA support for modems is generic, for other types of cards it's more specific, and only a few are explicitly supported.

Others may or may not be recognized-yet third tricky part.

Things get trickler if one of the two system's serial ports is disabled For example, if all communication programs are set to use standard COM2 and you don't need three serial ports, disabling COM2 should make its resources available for the PCMCIA modern card and app cations won't have to be reset to use it. Unfortunately, it does not work that way under OS/2 (see sidebar): P&P will report an error on IRQ3 under Assigned Resources, indicating a conflict.

Other types of PCMCIA cards (e.g. game, network, removable disk SCSI controllers) do not have COM ports to contend with but the still need unique I/O addresses and IROs, which may cause configura tion problems. Moreover, while OS/2 PCMCIA support for medens generic, for other types of cards it's more specific, and only a few all explicitly supported Others may or may not be recognized third tricky part.



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OS/2 continued

A Well-Kept Secret

The AUTOUTL2 program installed in the P&P folder can be used to resolve card configuration problems. It works in conjunction we scripts provided for supported cards-text files (SCR) that contain configurations (I/O address, IRQ and, for modems, COM portific those cards. When used to change any setting in a script. AUTOUTLE updates the base device driver AUTODRV2 SYS to reflect the change

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Running the program opens the window in Figure 2. The Maidle Cards listed on the left are the supported cards, for which scopis & provided. Among them there is a generic modern card with four posses ble configurations, one for each address supported by COM.SYS

To resolve configuration problems for a supported card, the setting can be changed by Editing the script for that card. Adding the cold

configuration to the selected list on AUTOUTL2 to proto the driver

For example, on systems with two card will be set at 3E8 as COM3. which requires a free IRQ. Select Modem Card (3E8) from the Available



Fig. 2

hst and click on Edit. This will open the window on Figure 3 Type th number of any free IRQ over the default 4 (yes, type—the bst conta only 3, which is already used by COM1) and click on OK to save the new setting in that specific script (MODEM 3 SCR) Back on the will dow in Figure 2, click on Add and Modern Card (3E8) will be added the left list (this step is required!!), then Save, AUTOUTL2 will we you that it updates the device driver. OK it and Exit

Rebooting the system loads the updated driver, which reflect

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FIG. 3

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Thinking Base Thoughts

Utilities For Creating and Maintaining Databases

Databases.

where mailing lists, expense records, survey results, and transaction data are kept, are the unglamorous backbone of the computerized life.

It seems to me that businesses are either over- or under-databased, and both of these realities provide opportunities for the small business. Those large businesses that are overdatabased may have massive records and have no idea what to do with them. They may have no sense of data-mining, no ability to dig in the data and find new facts. This provides we kind of opportunity for us: We can offer to go into someone's database and produce new kinds of information that they have never sought out. This may meet to be a specialist's skill, but to a large extent it is made up of the ability to ask new questions of old information.

Considerably easier is the complementary skill: Creating databases for businesses that do not have them, but need them. People don't know all the possibilities of a well-made database system: customer tracking, inventory control, call-back and follow-up, accurate costtracking by project. One solution is a pre-made package like Intuit's QuickBooks, reviewed here recently. But many companies need truly cus-



tomized programs with the possibility of modifying them easily. And they need someone to help maintain them.

That is where you see come in.

This month we will look at two programs which may address these sorts of projects. One helps you create databases out of reports. The other helps you design database structures.

Importing Without Grief

One common scenario is good data in an inconvenient form. The information you want

Data Import will convert from any of seventeen formats to thirty-eight others. All the standard spreadsheets and databases are supported as targets. More significantly, this product will let you take apart a report to retrieve its data.

in available, but only an a print-out You can scan it in, but then you or have a text file. Or it exists in the the old IBM EBCDIC format and is no even in ASCII characters. You need to convert such data to a spreadsheet o database you can use

If you were confronted will this task only once, you would just probably swear under your breath and type the information in again Il problem, though, in threefold The work is mind-numbingly tediov because of that, you are very likely to make errors; therefore you mus proofread it. The profit you hoped to make by working with the data is los

in the time and labor you spend converting data. If you have to do this more than once, AD better (and cheaper) to get a program which will do it for you.

As more and more data is becoming available on the Web, the problem increases. Much Census data is now available for free download (http://www.census.gov/) but how are you to 8 It into your favorite database? Enter Data Import for Windows. For just under 5200. 100 can get a utility that will convert from any seventeen formats to thirty-eight others. All the standard spreadsheets and databases are suf ported as targets.

More significantly, this product will let you take apart a report to retrieve its data. These are the documents with varying formals produced by databases to let humans examine their results in hard copy. I had a report from 1991-3 series of 454 observations in a study of the half people choose company in a cafeteria report's format was full of blank lines, ude line

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Small Office/Home Office continued

and lines with page numbers. The data itself was grouped in the following pattern:

Date: mm/dd/yy Place: xxx

observation I

observation 2

From this report I wanted in get a database with four fields: Date, Place, Observation, Time,

Data Import's works with markup tools. Information to be included and excluded is highlighted in different colors for each diata-type. These choices are made with a cursor that looks like the end of a feli-tupped marker. You can mark any column as data, choose the format (text, numeric, date, time) and name it. You can choose lines for exclusion, or choose lines to be what Data Import calls "tag lines." The information on that line is included in each field made from items below it.

The spreadsheet I got after translation had two fields in each record brought in by marking

their columns ("Observation" and "Time"), and two obtained from the tag lines in my report ["Date" and Place."]

After reading the manual—and Data Import is men program where you really need to read the manual and try out the tutorial—I was able to retrieve my data rather quickly. This was my first try with the program, but I still converted from a text file to an Excel worksheet in less than one half-hour.

Web data can be imported as HTML pages, which are painful to de-format, or they can be cut to the clipboard and pasted into a text file. This cutting and pasting eliminates the invisible HTML tags.

When I attempted to make a database out of a randomly chosen online catalogue, I got # bit confused and ended up calling the support people for Data Import. We talked for a few moments, and then they suggested I fax them the data and they would look at it. I did. They gram is self-englanatory,

It might seem that all this is a lot of weakly one data-translation, and it may be Definport is designed primarily for these who must repeatedly convert data. When you have finished designing a data-conversion pure what the program refers to as a 'mask' we can we it for later reuse on similarly forms ted data. It is also possible to run Data lings in batch mode. Fell it the file to convert lies the mask to use, and the file to which these put we to be sent. The conversion will be dear automatically.

Hodel

Ны

Data Import for Windows can pay for ask the first time you use it. Recommended despite the missing call-back from their heldepartment.

Do You Want Salsa With That?

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Small Office/Home Office continued

About a year ago I began to receive a barrage of well designed marketing gimmlicks from Wall Data, the maker of Salsa. They sent balloons and vibrating cushions. They sent CDs with multimedia into ductions. They sent everything they could think of It worked, I suppose, in that I did try the product.

The good news first. Salsa is designed specifically for the quick development and modification of databases. The result is not just a family of tables; it is a complete data application with onscreen forms, the necessary data tables, and reports.

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I decided to make up a database for a whimsical, farsighted imaginary company I call them farsighted because they plan to sell thing to the cadets at Starfleet Academy, which the Star Trek TV show tells will be located in Marin County several centuries from now.

The first thing the business will need is a list of cadets. Salsa has an interviewing "wizard" which will talk you through the creation of your application. I used it to make a miniature database of cadet information. Salsa provided a menu of available database objects, and invited in the salsa provided a menu of available database objects, and invited in the salsa salsa objects, and invited within seemed safe enough, and renamed it "Cadet" affect dropping if on my workspace. Then I placed into it a "Name" field, also by drog ging and dropping. I chose a compound field, "Address," which had subfields for street address, state and zip code in the salsa and zip

By the time Starfleet Academy is graining the hills of southern Mariathings will have changed. So I customized these fields I renamed "State" to be "Region," and made "Zip Code" into "Postal Code." I added a lext field to the address object, and renamed that text field "Planet."

Good enough for a beginning, let = build = application.

Salsa has an application generator, which will take the database system you have designed so far and make it into a Salsa database. The application that comes out of the generator has its own menus, its reports, and its forms for data entry I entered some data for a structure of the structure o

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Small Office/Home Office

I discovered I wanted to make changes in my application. I went through the generated application's menu to return to Salsa, and continued the design process. The data I had already entered preserved, and would continue to be unless I were to make the object "Cadet" in which it was stored, or eliminate one

I decided I wanted some buttons am my data-entry form. Salsa provides "actions" which are devices that do things for you. I tried adding actions to save records. to create m new record

and to go to previous and following records. I regenerated the application with actions. Their buttons appeared, not on the form, but on a toolbar Good enough

Back in the design section, I realized that I wanted to have these buttons available on any

form I created I therefore made a new "action group" and put these actions into at. I was briefly proud of myself, until I investigated an actiongroup called "record" that was ready-made for me. It had all these functions, and more. This is a common pattern in Salsa. You build something, and then discover that you want to have this or that added to it. You add some things,

data object to record the planers that the van cadets came from, and their species Cadet Vulcan. I added the "record" action group to this new table-object. Total time to design the table-perhaps 90 seconds

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and then say, "Why don't I just make a group of these things? I may use them again. " So you do Moments later you realize that Salsa has already provided that exact combination as a template. It's sort of the Salsa dance.

Chagrined and appreciative, I created a new

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Small Office/Home Office continued.

Salsa hovers on the edge of being tremendously useful. For instance, it is possible to save databases in Microsoft Access format, "Hot damn," I said, "I can design a database with Salsa, and then use it henceforth with Access." Yeah, well, not quite. Salsa produces databases in MS Access format, but when you open them in the MS Office for Windows 95 version of Access, you are told that this database is in an older version of MS Access. To make it fully useable, you must convert it to a file format from the later version of Access. That presumably will make it no longer accessible to Salsa. So Salsa missed the opportunity to be a very useful and appealing design-tool for MS Access databases.

"So what?" you say, "I'll just make databases in the proprietary Salsa format and give them to my client." Well, again, not quite. Salsa eenerates applications, yes. But your clients must have either Salsa itself (\$350) or the Salsa Application Viewer (\$49) to run them. So you cannot just produce a finished .exe application

BY MICROTINES - MARCH 5 199

and hand it over. They or you will have to buy at least a copy of the Salsa Application Viewer.

After you build for a number of clients, those \$49 expenditures will mount up, and you will begin to look with longing at those corporate standard databases which will produce freestanding applications with no run-time fee. For instance, for \$539 you can "competitively upgrade" to the MS Office 97 Development Edition, which includes a rayalty-free run-time engine for MS Access

Kris Kelsay, sales and marketing manager for Salsa, would like to point out that one recoups some of this expense because of the speed of

Unfortunately, Salsa may have managed to sit down between two stools. It is not usable as a design-tool for Microsoft Access, because it produces out-of-date MS Access files; it is not able m build free-standing applications you can disinbute. Instead it insists that every user have a copy of the Salsa Viewer Sorry, folks-the tariff is

future they offer a free run-time engine, or supevaluation will shift, and we'll mention it here. Copyright @ 1997 by Birrell Walsh All rights

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ACCOUNTING . BY DAVID A. SIMON, CPA, AND JENNIFER R. CHERNISS

New Tax Code May Decode Code Tax

Proposed IRS Software Transaction Rules

Squint, and

you can was the sun using through the mist. The IRS issued proposed regulations clarifying treatment of income from transactions involving computer programs. Under the proposal, transactions related to computer programs will generally be classified—and taxed—as solely within one of four categories.

Although these rules would be restricted to limited areas dealing primarily with foreign transacuous and rax treates, they forebode far-reaching changes to every niche of the software industry. Many clues suggest that the IRS is merely test-marketing the rules in the foreign transactions are na before broadening their applicability to all software transactions. The underlying precepts have been evolving for years.

Creation of the following four categories of software transactions are proposed:

 Transfer of a copyright right within a computer program.

(2) Transfer of a copy of a computer program (a copyrighted article).

[3] Provision of services for the development or modification of a computer program, an (4) Provision of know-how relating to com-

puter programming techniques.

The rules week as clarify the present system of taxing software transactions. Such exchanges often straddle between the gray and the murky in tax definitions. Traditional definitions get strained when the work that programmers perform is reduced to digital code and transferred onto a physical disk. It can be unclear whether a software writer has soft personal services, a tangible product, or a bundle of intangible rights.

all subject to very different tax treatments.

For years, cases and rulings characterized software transactions by drawing analogies with the performance of traditional services and the sale of products. The IRS proposal critis a new framework, starting with the copyright law, and treating software uniquely.

"With these few precepts in thy memory, look thou character." —Bill Shakespeare

In developing the new framework, Treasury has been guided by the following principles:

(1) The rules should take into account special characteristics of computer programs, such as the ability to deliver copies electronically as well in physically, and to make perfect copies at little or in cost

(2) Wherever possible, transactions that are functionally equivalent should be treated similarly. For example, a transfer for internal most of example, with California sales tax rules, which tax shrink-wrapped software but exclude the same software sent over phone lines

Compare a computer program with a book When a copy of a book is purchased, the purchaser does not thereby also acquire the copy right rights. On the other hand, the author might choose to sell those rights to a publisher Computer programs are also protected by copyright law. The proposed regulations distinguish between transactions of rights and of things (programs or displays) subject to copyright.

The regulation states that a transfer of a copyright right may be either a sale or license of that right, and a transfer of a copyrighted article may be either a sale or lease of that article

The Copyright Act of 1976 grants five exclusive rights to a copyright owner. According the proposed regulations, three are most rele-

Although these rules would be PESTRICTED to limited areas dealing primarily with foreign transactions and tax treaties, they FOREBODE far-reaching changes to every niche of the software industry.

lifty copies of a program should generally be treated the search as a transfer of search copy with the right so make forty-nine other copies, all for internal use.

The method of transferring the computer program—say, physically an a disk or electronically by modern—swill be irrelevant in determining whether copyright rights or a copyrighted article has been transferred. Contrast this, for

vant in the same of software

(1) The right to reproduce the copyrighted work;

(2) The right to prepare derivatives of the copyrighted work, which may themselves be separately copyrighted; and

(3) The right to distribute copies of the copyrighted work to the public by sale, license, or other transfer.

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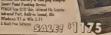
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Trans

monally in certain circumstances, the right endlish perform or display the copyrighted

Whough the proposed regulations mainly on copyright law principles in determining mer a right or an article has been transend to some cases the regulations depart introditional law. The proposal specifies that traya transaction is treated under copyright · forsit necessarily govern for tax purposes. and because you call the transaction a cer-" thing in your contract doesn't mean that "RS is bound by that for tax purposes.

Here is an illustration of the proposed regu-This A permanent transfer of a computer gam, on disk, for internal arm only is made for a one-time payment. The transacan syled as a license of copyright rights (a "dard "shrink-wrap" software license) The regulations would treat this as the sale of a inghted article and not the transfer of a anght right. Thus, for tax purposes, the proreats an off-the-shelf software purchase thetail sale rather than a licensing arrangeof even though the standard shrink-wrap tr plate is clearly a license arrangement "der copyright law.

Amilarly, the proposed regulations treat the set of a right to copy different from transda copyright right, unless accompanied by *Bit to distribute the copies to the public. A siltense, for all practical purposes, is the as a transaction in which many disks are So, a site license is taxed as a sale of represented article, not as the transfer of a

California sales tax rules ax shrink-wrapped loftware but exclude he same software sent over phone lines.

he four categories of transactions are arbed in more detail below.

hansfer of Copyright Rights

Tarious tax concepts, the transfer of ohen confers a favorable tax treatbut for lax purposes under the proposed tax purposes under the properties to properties to purpose under the purpose than are the rights set out in the

Copyright Act. The restrictions take into account the special nature of a computer program, such in that it may represent either a personal service or # physical product, depending on how you east it. The right to copy software is treated as a product right only if it is also transferred with the right to distribute such copies to

The other copyright rights, for me purposes, consist of the right to prepare derivative programs, to make a public performance of the program, and to publicly display it.

Transfers involving copyright rights am then further classified as either sales or licenses of



Accounting continued

copyrights. This determination depends upon whether or not all substantial rights to the software have passed from seller to buyer. The definition of "all substantial rights" for this purpose incorporates a body of established rules beyond the scope of this article.

II. Transfer of a Copyrighted Article

The transfer of off-the-shelf software subject to a shrink-wrap license will generally be considered a sale of a copyrighted article. A copyrighted article, here, includes a copy of a computer program from which the work can be perceived.

reproduced, or otherwise communicated. This broad language should treat an Internet swap just as if a disk was plopped on the counter.

A transfer involving a copyrighted item will be further classified as either a sale an a lease of that item, depending on whether or not the benefits and burdens of ownership have passed to the buyer.

III. Provision of Services Related Software Development

There would be new rules for determining whether a transaction involving a newly-devel-

oped or modified program will be treated as a gories. Taxpayers will typically attempt to avoid this classification because of a host of rules that may lead to higher taxes on service income, and

The determination is based on all facts and circumstances, including how risk of loss is allo cated and the parties' intent as to ownership of the copyright

IV. Provision III Know-How

Rules provided for determining if a transfer of information related to a computer program will be considered the provision of know-how A provision of know-how will be considered to occur only if a party transfers information that meets all three of the following conditions

(1) It relates to computer programming

(3) It is protected as a trade secret

Thus, for tax purposes, the proposal treats an off-the-shelf software purchase as a retail sale rather than a licensing arrangement, with though the standard shrink-wrap boiler plate is clearly a license arrangement under copyright law.

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(2) It is incapable of being copyrighted, and

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MICROTINES + MARCH 5, 1997 93

BY ROYAL P. FARROS

The Making Of An Internet Business: Part V

Open For Business! Now What?

I was going

to talk about how crazy hiring has gotten in Silicon Valley, but something important has happened that will make me detour slightly from our regularly scheduled program:

iPrint has opened for business!

And, since the title of this series is "The Making of an Internet Business," I thought—
after many, many sleepless nights and weekends—it might be interesting to share one little
moment of celebration with you:
H-U-R-R-A-Y!

Before 1 start yelling, "I'm going to Disneyland!," here are some observations on the process up to now.

What's Open For

First, a bit of background. We've

created the "iPrint Discount Printing & CyberStauonery Shop

of the Future," It is an Internet

site like no other (but then,

"Internet applications," which means you can actually do

(Print is really one of the first

Business?

aren't they all?).

With shameless commercialism out of the way, here are some random observations on finally getting internet business open on day one.

This isn't Kansas Anymore

"Shipping" on the Internet is a like shipping a shrink-wrapped desktop application. It's lots easier, but don't let this fool you.

What am I talking about? Maybe I'm just too much of a desktop applications person, but this "beta-ware" hing has gotten a bit out of control. It definitely is inappropriate if you are extending goods or services across the Internet. I certainly don't want anyone "practicing" with my credit card information.

This does bring us to the changing nature of

hundreds of people pounding away

But simulation is not the real thing Make sure you allow a few weeks to a few months for working with a manageable number of "he" customers in an observatory-like environment (Trust me on this one. Even if you think you're ready, you're not. Don't shortchange scale-up testing.)

Build It And They Won't Know Who The Heck You Are

You'll have time for scale-up testing whether you want to do it or not. That's because unless people (1) magically know about you, and (2) actually want to visit you, the moment that the proverbial neon "We're Open" sign flickers on nothing much will happen at your site.

Damn, is that why people say marketing and promouon is imporTENCEC

While you're in scaleup mode, take this imit to get listed in every' search engine and directory listing you can Most have a delay ranging from a few days to as long as a one month, so the minute you open for business, get busy sub-

Every piece of code, even Internet code, goes through an "alpha" (early) and "beta" (late) testing period.
Electronic commerce code should go through an additional testing period:

scale-up testing.

something at the iPrint site. Like make business cards, stationery, stamps labels, checks, and more—and actually see what you're creating directly on-screen.

I cordially invite everyone to check [Print on ut [http://www.c/Print com] In my ever-so-humble opinion, not only will you get a sense of where the "next wave" of electronic commerce applications are going, but you'll have a lot of fun to boot

the testing period. Every piece of code, even Internet code, goes through in "alpha" (early) and "beta" (aue) testing period. Electronic commerce code should in through in additional testing period. Scale up testing.

Things may work just fine when you've got a couple people using your site. And, if you're smart, you'll find a way so simulate tens and

mitting your site's information.

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t 25, EarthLink founder and chairman Sky Dayton is on his third startup, and it just went public, attracting prominent investors like George Soros.

As he talks about the company and conducts an impromptu tour of the facilities designed to accommodate his explosively growing business, pointing out such niceties as air-conditioning vents in the floor so the servers' wires stay cool, he is by turns the thoughtful, well-spoken senior executive and the street-hockey enthusiast who, some years back "smelled the smell of new computer" and social-engineered his way out of his employer's darkroom and into a position as desktop publishing czar running newdy.

arrived Mac Ils.

The grandson of an IBM Research Fellow and previous endeavors. Cafe Mocha m Melrose and a graphics design company, had kept him occupied since he graduated from high school at 16, but by 1993 he'd heard enough about the Internet that he wanted to be there.

The Internet, in many ways, was the perfect combination of what I was doing at the coffeehouse and what I was doing in computer technology," he recalls "It was the global technology coffeehouse,"

Getting online was easier said than done, though After much effort ("I think I had to tell them I was a student...") he found a provider

willing to sell him an account. "I paid them some money and they sent me this sheet of paper with some very odd-looking numbers on it. I thought there was some mistake! The subnet mask, the IP address, the gateway-what is that stuff? There was no software. And I had a Mac, so what do you do?"

Engst's Internet Starter Kit later, Dayton was on the simultaneously

struck by the breadth of available online riches and the prohibitive difficulty in the path of the luckless soul tryang to get at them. "As soon as I was on the Internet, it but me—this is the greatest communications medium we have ever seen. This is an incredible chance for communication on earth. This is great. But it's incredibly hard to get on, and it's incredibly hard to use. And it's esotenca out the roof

EarthLink was born, with Dayton and one employee, and it's been a wild ride ever since About a year ago customers were signing on faster than EarthLink could support them, and the Net resounded with howls of distress while EarthLink hired and hired. But before the probtem reached the multi-state class-action-suit stage with which AOL is currently confronted, the company had implemented an ongoing plan to keep its infrastructure ahead of its growth.

Not necessarily one to look at the world through conventional filters. Dayton is fond of describing FarthLinks strategy in terms of, of all things, the OSI model, comparing the physical layers of networking topography to market opportunities on the internet. See Issue #150, an updated tersion of Davion's paper on the subject is at the according net special mathematical hand.

and open environment, to know exactly where you are, who your neighbors are, and how to

Since AOL's problems were much in the head-

How do AOL's current troubles relate to the problems EarthLink had with rapid growth last year?

AOL is in an interesting position for the industry, because they have both an access and a content model. In a way they're analogous to the old supercomputer companies that wanted to make the hardware and all the software that ran on it, and create a closed environment.

closed environment

stands for, It's am open heavy segmentation-inother words, specialization by people that work

access are two very dif-AOI, has this problem of

millions of users, while having to do the access and the content with a limited amount of resources

At EarthLink we're in a unique position in that we only do access. We don't do content. We don't build browsers. Obviously we don't make hardware; we don't focus on services and so forth. We focus on allowing somebody to connect to the Internet and get the most out of it, whether that be to a destination like AOL or C|Net == MicroTimes un whatever, on the Internet.

We have a group in the company called Member Services, which in many ways has remained our secret weapon. We first conquered the problem of getting somebody connected to the Internet effortlessly, quickly, reliably, and so forth. Once they're connected, the real issue is what do they do on the Internet that they're going to get value from. We have a whole group in the company that focuses on just that problem.

We started by cataloguing some of the best sites on the Internet for our members, and providing educational tools. We have a booklet that we send to our customers when they sign up; we have an ongoing monthly newsletter that we send out to all our customers, a paper object. We follow that up with navigational tools that

Earthlink Founder On The Internet Business Many hours with Adam By Mary Eisenhart

Photos: Ann Summa

allow our customers to get to content resources on the Net. That has all culminated recently into this Personal Start Page service, a totally customized view of the Internet for each person—as customizable as your desktop.

So how did you solve your hypergrowth problem last year?

We work really hard. We have a really good management team that came into the company in late '95, early '96. We proceeded on a path to build the company out ahead of demand. in we put a company here that was much larger than our customer base.

[laughs] Two and a half years ago it is not me and one other staff member in a 600-square-foot office. With everything I did tech support and I did sales, and many of our earliest members, who are still with us, come up to me at trade shows and say "Hey! I remember when you gave me tech support"

We were able to grow out of a culture of servicing the customer and helping them with their Internet experience, and not lose that culture while adding new members. The fact that we grew 1000% last year is a good example. I think that's really a credit to our management team and the folks that have come in at all levels of the company. We were able to move from 600 square feet to 12,000, and now to something on the order of 150,000 square feet, and grow our staff again up a head of demand.

That said, we know we have a lot of challenges ahead of us, because this is such an early market, and in many ways we're only limited by our own ability to grow.

As Internet provider startups go, I think Netcom was the first to go public, and you're the most recent. How would you contrast your experiences?

well, Netcorn has been around a longer time. The biggest difference between EarthLink and Netcom is that, if you look at my model, Netcom is vertically integrated. They own the network and they own the application layer, and everything in between, essentially.

That has made them focus a little bit differently than we have. Netcom, I believe, ill a good company—a lot of the early adopters that got on the Internet for the first time have used Netcom.

I think we're really moving into the next phase of the Interner's adolescence—I don't think we're anywhere near maturity yet—where we're starting # == a shift from just connecting people and giving them a TCP/IP pipe, to need ing to provide something on it. You need to be there for the person, create a relationship with them, educate them and == forth.

Lapra	Name	Description.	Example
7	Application	The communications applications themselves	enal, in transfer, cheraferrer applications. Applications such as mentione in Eudern talk to this layer
6	Presentation	Syntax for data conversion, makes	ASCII, bitany convernou, encrypro and decryption, sockes
5	Session	Stars, stops and governs	Sockets, synchronmanon
· 4	Tempor	delivery of the completed	TCP, SNA, UDP
3	Nerwork	Rooms data to different networks Forms packets	IP, z 25, IPX, AppleTelk, Rosenne
2	Date Link	Transmus item item to ande Dandes bus toto frames	Ethernet, Token wasse Frame Relay, Bridging
1	Physical	cherry and medican like bard,	RTS, CTS, Im 232, copper, fiber,

	Hantware	Service .	Access	Content	Services	Expertise
Applicance	Apple, Istel, Dell, Owever	Nicrosoft Quaterisck	EarhLink, Netcom, Spryme, GNI	AOL, Compositive, Producy, CNN, WSJ	Yahno, Emus Infossek, Lyons	CKS, Diges Panet, USWeb
Procurence	Sun SOI, HP, IEM, DEC, MARI	Netacape, Macasofi, Interworld	EastMank Netcom, Spryout, ONN IRM	AOL. Company Proday, HBI	CyberCash, RSA, Companye, I BBN UPm, Netcomy	CRS, Digit Pleast, USWeb
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Herwazk	Bay, 3Com, Welklers	FTP, Necroanage, Necwork TeleSystems	Necous, UUNET, PSIMe, Concentre, MCI BBN Sprmelmk	AOLNei (AVS), Compusive, Spizienei, BBN	BHN, Computers, Nerwork Solitanus	Andrewa, EDS, Perol, BBN
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The OSI model (top) and Dayton's corresponding industry map.

I think come from that school. We did not start as a technology solution, we started as a communications solution. It's what people did on our network that we cared about from the beginning, not necessarily how they connected.

So in that way, Netcom and EarthLink took very diverging paths

One of the things AOL has always stressed as its value-added is its particular version of online community—Steve Case recognized the importance of online community rather before III was fashionable, and to this day the people who are loyal to AOL are probably most loyal to their online buddies — AOL rather than to AOL Itself. Is there an == EarthLink equivalent!

There's certainly a community here of EarthLinkers, or Linkers. There's a whole earthlink, newsgroup environment where they tend to post, but now more than anything else, they're staring to meet in EarthLink chat rooms. Wir

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Here again, the point is to get people together, to create a sense of community, if you will. We're trying to help people to get on the Internet, get educated mit it, maybe meet other people on the Internet, and ultimately get some great value out of it—because ultimately the Internet is only as good as the value if it is not produces for people it?

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Many of me early
adopters got all caught up
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Internet.

Is there a personality profile of the EarthLink customer—are they in a particular business, am there strong interest groups in a particular area?

We've looked at the demographic profiles of our customers, and aside

from the standard Internet demographic they don't tend to fit any particular group. The way I characterize our members is that they're people who want to get the absolute most out of the Internet—for business, for personal use, for entertainment. They use a lot of time on the Internet each month through our services, a good indication of the value they're getting.

I think that's me sharp contrast to many people who have come on to an online service, of me another provider, and haven't had the opportunity to get educated on all the tools and how to me them. As a result, they me it a little bit and give up. They get frustrated, they get overwhelmed. The Internet can be very daunting. And ultimately cither they don't use the service or they just stop using the Internet.

If that happens, we've all failed.



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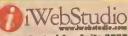
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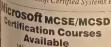


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MICROTIMES - MARCH 5, 1997 99

And we've all lost out, because it's only as good what gets put into it.

Exactly

How would you differentiate EarthLink and its business model from the sea of ISPs out there? There me plenty of places where you buy flat-rate Internet, maybe even cheaper. The commodity services are much the same from place to place. What's different about EarthLink?

I could answer that question two ways-1 could focus on the competitive issues, or the overall grand picture.

First of all, the Internet access business has a very low barrier to entry. It's the modern-day BBS industry-unybody with a computer and a few modems can be an "ISP." Frankly, they can do a pretty good job of it for a small group of people.

There's a low barrier to entry, but there's an extremely high barrier to growth in this business. It's a very capitalintensive, people-intensive, technology-intensive business. We found that it took a lot of capital, and it took a lot of intellectual and executive capital to grow the company and keep it on the rails through some enormous growth,

If you look at it on a chart, there's EarthLink with five or ten times more customers

than the largest medium-sized Internet access provider, and then there's a whole group of literally thousands of tiny ISPs-100 or 200 or even lifty customers. The fact is, it takes this many companies at this stage in the Internet's growth to grassroots-bootstrap it into existence.

If the industry were to commoditize and these companies were to start falling by the wayside (which they're not, by the way), we would probably not see the kind of growth onthe Internet that we would see if they were to remain in existence at the grassroots levelpushing an helping people in local communities, providing niche services, and so forth. That's all very, very important.

About two and a half years ago IDC or somebody came out with a study that said "In a year and a half there's going to be thirty ISPx" laught A year and a half later, there's 5000 more's

And they're all buying and selling bandwidth from each other, and the telcos they're competing with... In fact, one piece of conventional wisdom making the the rounds right now is that the business model for a lot of these ISPs. 100 MICROTIMES - MARCH 5, 1887

involves signing up a whole fot of users at a loss and selling the company and its client base to PacBell. How real is that?

This is not a business like the telephone business where you give somebody an anonymous seven-digit number and walk away. There's a real value that a small ISP can provide.

You need a personal touch with each person.

"We did not start as a technology solution, we started as a communications solution. It's what people did on our network that we cared

about from the beginning, not necessarily how they connected."



the first time. I think there's a real business in doing that at the local level, in the community, providing classes, providing expertise for local

It's very analogous to the retail businessthere's WalMarts, and there's the corner liquor store, if you will, and they're both doing well in their relative position. That's going to become more obvious as we stop lumping ISPs into one bucket. Let's separate them out into four or five different buckets, and we'll see that there's real value at the small level, the medium level, and the large-scale level as well,

The one statistic that truly matters in this business, and this is where I really agree with Steve Case about how early this business is—the latest number I saw was 11% of households have access to internet or online services, so 89% of the market is totally untapped. This is very, very far from a mass medium at this point. For it to be a true mass medium, we need to get penetration at least above 50%-you look at cable, 60%, that urea, Telephony, upper 90s, TV. 56%. That's where we need to be

You also have to be able as get as big as cable without having your customers hate you as much a cable customers invariably hate their cable company. No can wait for there to be alternative to their cable companyl

[laughs]That's classic-when you have a monopoly, that happens.

People would buy cable from the phone company with songs in their hearts!

Absolutely Competition does amazing things It provides the environment for peo ple to be their best, and to do better

and better and better. A monopolistic There seem to be two simultant

ous and apparently contradictory things going on with the need to make the Internet a mass medium. You were talking about how this in wery niche-y segmented business, and its strength is its ability to focus on relatively narrowly-defined affinities, business or otherwise.

This of course is in direct contrast to the mass-medium broad-

cast kind of model. On the publishing side, we've seen people figure "Oh, this is going to be just like TV, and we're going to get rich selling ads on the Internet." And the only people who are able to make it really work on that model at the Yahoos and the like, who do literally have millions of people in a day.

That kind of number and agency can understand, but your average business's Web site and your average magazine's Web site aren't going to be attracting the kind of num bers that will viable in a broadcast model. On the other hand, they could very well be get ting well-targeted demographics. How do you see all that working?

The promise of the Internet in the market of one. The entity that has a message can find the person who is most likely to consume that me sage and act on it over the Internet, unlike any medium we've ever had. And this happens in 8 way that the person can receive the community catton; can elect to receive or not receive; can elect to act on or not act on that communi cation, much more easily.

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Right. And I believe it will shake the rafters of traditional media. It will change the whole paradigm-I hate to use that word [laughs]. The woof and the warp are going to come undone, in a way

For the first time the individual has the ability to communicate back to the communicator. Whereas today, you look at a traditional newspaper or broadcast television-what in that?

All they're doing is hitting you with communication. If you disagree with something, or you want to get some information in a different way, forget it. You have to sit down and write a letter; chances are they're said going to read it; there's no two-way medium.

I think the moment I "got" this, years ago, when I wideo of the first Hackers Conference. Dave Hughes was holding forth on the subject of his BBS in Colorado Springs. and how you spoke about things you were interested in to other people based on their similar interests, rather than their physical or demographic characteristics.

Apparently on the board there had been this furious argument on the subject of foreign policy, in which there were two chief combatants, very well-matched. When they finally met, it emerged that one was a retired Air Force colonel and the other was a twelveyear-old girl.

Wow! That's amazing! [laughs]

That's exactly what it's about to me. I'm an editor. I have people coming up to me saying "I'd like to write for your magazine," and I have the power (say yea or may to those people. But now, if I say nay, they can go start # Web probably reach # larger audience than I can reach. And that is profoundly significant. I personally think this is great, not being big == the yea == nay side of things; I'd much rather let people go out and find stuff and filter for themselves.

Right

It's nice that ill that hierarchy that kept individuals from being able to communicate with large audiences is being dismantled.

I think it will change the way we live in more ways than we can possibly imagine.

Spin scenarios

Well, the example you gave as a great example. When I want to tell a business person about the power of the Internet, a common example I give is, I pull up Disney's home page. A multibillion-dollar corporation, incredible global reach, tens of thousands of people delivering their message, control of a media empire-and then I pull up Joe's Fireplace



Mantel Sets from Burlington, VT.

I put them up side-by-side, and I say, "What's the difference?" The graphics are different, the message is different, but the medium is the same. They both have access to the same medi-

And for \$20 a month or whatever, Joe is doing his business on the Internet.

He doesn't have to link up with Ace Hardware.

No! He doesn't

Today it's very early, because we're a a very early stage of this market. His audience is limit

ed to the number of people that are on the compared to the population. But as that number grows and everybody gets on the Internet. those two forms of communication, whether it be Disney or Joe's Fireplace Mantels, will ultimately be at parity. It will be up to them to stack on top of that a superior message targeted to a particular audience

For the last fifty years of the "information age," man has generally been subjected to the communication of others. And his or her ability to communicate has been limited to the communication channels that they control As a result, the most powerful organizations in the world are the ones that control the communication lines of the world-the media companies.

Well, that has meant that the communications that were put on those channels, those communication lines, were limited to the very small group of people relative to the population B whole who controlled them. So there was a huge idea bottleneck, if you will.

As a result, if I had a good idea, I could print some leaflets and distribute them around, but my reach is far more limited. I think that there's a huge wellspring of intellectual treasure sitting In this society that has not had a chance to find a communication channel.

A mind is a terrible thing im waste.

Yes! And the Internet will provide that! Not only will it provide people an ability to communicate, it will allow them to find the people who are interested in that idea. Who can add to it, can use it. So the producer and the consumer geographically, culturally, separated by language-they can find each other over the Internet

That just changes all the rules. It's a whole game. And going forward, 2000, 2010, I think we're really going to start to see the results of that But it'll take a little while. The first thing we have to do is get everybody on the Internet! [laughs]

How would you contrast the kind of Internet access EarthLink offers with the cable-based version offered by people like @Home and WebTV?

Well, I think WebTV is a great product. The fact of the matter is, 40% of the households we talk about have computers. The other 1115 don't. There's a generational issue; there's a real learning curve there that we need to work through. To get those people to have computers in their homes, the computers need to get east er and so forth. [Patting Macintosh on his desk] I hope Apple will make a through!

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I figure that im inexpensive device that will help get people who do not have computers onto the Internet is a very powerful concept. The more people get these devices, the more people get on the Internet, the more valuable the overall Internet is.

The @Home and cable models are good examples of alternative physical-layer delivery. We need that. We need some competiton for the telcos and their local loops.

As I showed in my model, I thought that there would be severe segmentation at the physical and data link layer, which is where the telcos, the cable companies, and so forth, all live, and that they would be able to provide new technologies that would allow the Internet to move faster. The physical layer made up the foundation of the network

positioned EarthLink so that as those changes come about. we're able to take advantage of them. We did not go out and invest in a bunch of network infrastructure. We decided to stay independent of it and focus more on what the member does on the Internet, and then let the telephone companies and the UUNets of the world all work on that

Let them lay the cable and build the backbone

Competition at the physical layer is utterly essential to the internet's future. Without it we will be stuck with a castle built on # foundation of sand, which is essentially what we have today. We need to get in there, np it out, pour a new one. We need to bring packet-switching into the central offices so we can relieve these various bortlenecks that we're seeing at a result of building packet-switched networks over these old circuit-switched networks

We need to have alternative media like twoway cable, hybrid sateilite systems-for example, we just launched with Hughes, with the DirectPC product, satellite downstream, modem up, It's not perfect, but it's an example of an alternative physical layer.

We need to commune to have that XDSL holds promise; wireless technologies hold promise. As long as there's competition at that layer, ultimately the Internet user will benefit from it. So Judge Green is your friend!

(laughs) Yes. I'm a late arrival to that game!

In many ways, creating an open market where competition decides pricing, decides what technology is used, is the only way to go in a high-technology business. You can't regulate something that changes every day. It's impossible.

One of the gripes people have about the cable approach is that there's a huge pipe going downstream, but a very puny pipe to let people talk back = publish. That's pretty

"The Internet is counter to everything a closed environment stands for. It's an open environment:

> it favors heavy segmentationin other words. specialization by people that work together."



producing and publishing your own stuff. How big an issue do you consider this?

I don't see it in that big of an issue, because the upstream communication tends to consume far less bandwidth. Even if you're using the Internet to communicate more than you're using it is consume-for example, if you operate a large mailing list-that pipe going up is plenty of capacity. It's consuming those large video files, large sound files, true multimedia, that requires a big downstream pipe.

That said, there me people who do need to have large pipes available to them to produce or communicate their services and so forth on the Internet. We would see those as co-locating at m Internet service provider, on a server or putting their own server in, in getting their own high-speed line that's symmetrical bandwidth in both directions.

Your prospectus is very big on the warnings about risk while inviting people to invest anyway. Obviously people came in and invested, some of them more high-profile than others. What kind of feedback do you get from investors?

First of all, any prospectus reads like that

Sure, But because of the nature of this business, you're very upfront about "we're not profitable yet, we're investing hugely in infrastructure because we expect to get huge fast, etc."

I think that the state of Wall Street mirrors in many ways the state of the world about the Internet. There's a huge awareness of the

Internet-the Internet has been pummeled into our brains night and day by

The investment community, the Wall Street community as a whole, is very interested in the Internet-they know there's something happening, but they're not quite sure what it is...reminds me of a song...[laughter]

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Many of them hopped on the Internet bandwagon a year ago at that euphoric valuation, with companies that had not had a chance to really prove their business model and they lost. That has created a sort of stigma, a backlash if you will If you read in my paper, I said that the backlash is coming, because the Interest is not well understood, and any time you have people investing or participating in something that they're

just doing because they're worrled about missing the boat or something, you have the opportunity to fail badly Peer pressure is a lousy reason in invest! Absolutely, and it produces the worst sort of

backlashes It takes a while for people to then get educated enough so they make an educated conscious decision about the value of a particular business. In that way, we're happy that we had the opportunity to go out and talk in the investment community and just talk about this business from the most basic standpointwhat is the Internet, really? Most people can not answer that question, and who can blame them? It's just so new.

So we have to start at that level, and from there we get into all the business models. But if somebody truly doesn't know how to connect to the Internet, or they're not on the Internet themselves, how are they ever going to under stand an advertising-supported model, or a transaction-supported model? Or even a mb It's not simple

continued on page 210

No, it's not





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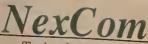












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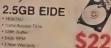
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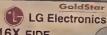
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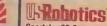
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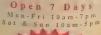
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Pilot PDA-Where Less Means More



US Robotics Tightens Its Focus And Gets Effective Results

By Michael Niemann

must admit that I began the review of US Robotics' Pilot PDA. (Personal Digital Assistant) with some preconceived notions. The image of Doonesbury's spoof of the first Newton was still strongly present in my mind. I also had some reservations about using Graffiti as a means to enser information. After 381, computers ought 181 adapt to the way humans work rather than the opposite. Well, I must see that the Pilot allayed many of my concerns. The old architectural design adage that less a more is a very fitting description for this PDA.

The Pilot is based on the Palm OS and includes a complete set if The spersonal information management) applications. The Palm (13 in an

operating system that enables the seamless integration of PDAs with desktop computer applications. The Pilot is an excellent example of that integration. The small device (it really does fit in a shirt pocket and weight only 5.5 oz.) contains an address book, a date book and calendar, a to-do list, and memo pad in addition to other utilities. Information is entered using a small stylus on the touch-sensitive screen. One may either use Graffiti-a special alphabet that consists of simplified characters designed to speed up text entry while minimizing recognition errors-in a special writing area, a small on-screen keyboard or transfer it from a desktop computer. Using its cradle, the Pilot me easily be connected to a desktop PC (a \$14.95 Mac Pack includes an adapter and Macintosh versions of the software) and with the touch of a button and transfer information from the desktop PC to Pilot and vice versa. The package contains PIM software for the PC which mirrors all functions on the Pilot, but the Palm OS is also compatible with many other PIM packages.

Initially, I had thought that the Pilot would be handy tool for my wife who, a massage therapist, requires exactly those functions offered in her daily routine she has to maintain a list of clients, juggle a schedule. and keep track of things to do. This plan came to m quick end. After a couple of hours she gave it back to me. "I can't read the screen, I can't use this I don't want to have to put on my glasses every time I use it." Well, here! encountered an inherent problem of IIII PDAs. The small size of the Pulot. one of its great advantages, in at the same time its biggest drawback. The characters on the screen me small and difficult to read, especially in poor lighting conditions. While the to-do list and the memo pad allow for larger characters, the crucial date and address functions are limited to one small character size

I then inherited the PDA (not because I have better eyes but because I wear my glasses all the time) and put it to use keeping track of my daily schedule at the college where I teach. I must say that the Pilot did a great job. Learning Graffiti was not difficult and in a short time I could enter quite a bit of information very quickly. Using it was very intuitive and without having read much of the manual the Pilot quickly became a regular part of my day. I was especially impressed with the ease of the "HotSync" feature, the ability to synchronize the contents of the Pilot with the desktop computer database. The software installed without a hitch and the data transfer went smoothly.

In all, US Robotics succeeded in creating a good product by focusing on a limited number of functions and implementing these in a superior fashion. If there are any improvements to suggest it would be a link between the various functions. Currently, in order to make an appoint ment with a person in the address book, one can either go straight to the date book and write the name or, using several steps, copy the name from the address book and paste it to the date book. It would be great if that function could be automated in future releases of the Pilot software Similarly, the Pilot is entirely character-based which means that it is cutrently impossible to store sketches or other small graphics in the memo pad function. These

minor issues notwithstanding, US Robotics has produced a capable product which can only improve given the host of new software which is being developed for in.

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Pilot 1000, \$249 (Mac Pack, \$14.95) US Robotics (Palm Computing Division) 4410 El Camino Real Los Altos, CA 94022 (415)949-9560

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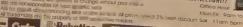
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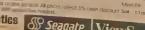
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Si Guide

INTERNET . BY JOHN'S QUARTERMAN

Notes From the Road

The Internet In Asia Pacific

One of the

great things about this business is that I'll be typing at the same old keyboard on my notebook in my room—and I'll look out the window and there, past the 20-story apartment blocks, is Victoria Peak in Hong Kong.

APRICOT

January 1997's conference MAPRI-COT (DRL: http://www.capricot.net/), the Asio Pacific Regional Internet Conference on Operational Technologies. It's quite ambitious, with three tracks of talks for most of two days (Wednesday and Thursday), and plenary sessions the rest. There were also two days of tutonals (Monday and Tresday). A mudslide me Colifornia testuled in Line Altimon being called in suddenly to give the sendmall tutorial.

vendor exhibit, with interop as an exhibitor, in an odd mass. This are only the second APRI-CO) (the first are a Singapore in 1996), at the 400-plus people in drew was a good attendance.

The speakers included the ever-present 4 IX (Commercial interruse Exchange) with half a dozen stati and many members present multiparation of the redoubtable Barb Dooles Sometimes I think their atten pix in organize the DOOLES - MARCH. THE PROPERTY OF TH

is9s are like herding all those ships in Hong Kop harbor, slow ferries, fast jetfoils and supercasts, upgboats, contamer ships, cruise boats It's the busiest harbor I've ever seen Perhaps the 100-foot dragons and fish in lights on the skycrappers on both sides of the water represent the big telephone companies wanting to get into the water Many of them already have, and were represented.



in the vendor show and suspeakers. This wasn't so policy conference as such, but there were sessions on policies and future speculations.

The point of the conference was practical. The biggest new development was perhaps the announcement that Alfavista (URL= http://www.alfavista.dlgual.com) % opening a nutrur site in the tegion, in Malayska. (By the way, Or Paul Flaherry tells me he picked the name



Altavista by looking at the office wall whe asked for a name and selecting two words by saw there

Asia Pacific

What is Asia Pacific, anyway?

East Asia meluding Southeast Asia and the Far East, plus Australia. New Zealand and Pacific Island nations, including, in this education of the Asia Pacific Island nations, including, in this ered part of Asia Pacific or not, but it was heavily represented, especially among speak and exhibitors. This was partly because in conference was intended to provide into and up for ISPs and others in the region and succeive the internet, that's the obvious place is the internet, that's the obvious place.

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Online Guide

Internet continued_

example, Daniel Karrenberg of RIPE, the European IP coordinating body, was there. And some sessions draw almost entirely from people in the region, such as the one on Internet exchange issues.

It's a very diverse region. Language ranges from relatively homogeneous Japan to huge China, with its multiple mutually incomprehensible dialects of Chinese (notably Mandarin in the north and Cantonese in the south, including Hong Kong). The conference language was English, because that at the only common lan-

guage in the region. Culture ranges from lapanese consensus to Singapore and Hong Kong boardroom to Chinese politics to New Zealand academic. Of course, most of the attendees were networkers, at they all participate in the global Internet ploabil true BGF, ICP, IP on everything, in technical matters there was htight the difficulty in understanding.

since Kilnam Chon of Korea III its organizer, and he had to be elsewhere at a G-7 meeting. As near II I III tell, it's a research project aimed at producing a high-speed backbone for the region, with organized traffic to Europe and the US.

Many APNG attendees were also at the APRI-

Many APNG attendees were also at the APRI-COT and APNIC (see below) meetings. APNG had a larger proportion of attendees from mainland China, however—apparently because APNG had no attendance fee, and the \$275 APRICOT was charging was a noticeable amount of money.

Of course, most of the attendees were networkers, so they all participate in the global Internet culture: BGP, IGP, IP on everything. In technical matters there was LITTLE difficulty in understanding.

REND

Earlier the same week, the Asia Pacific Network Group (APNG) met iii Hong Kong Polytechnic University This ii iii informal volunteer group of people who run networks and network research projects in the region, which for this group apparently extends as far west iii Pakistan and Kazakhsian.

The session on the Asia Pacific Advanced Network Consortium (APAN) (URL: http://www.apan.net) was particularly interesting, although I'm still not entirely sure what it is.

Speaking of languages, while APNG participants had little trouble following technical discussion, occasional difficulties did arise in distinguishing a question from a statement, or an offhand comment from a measured response, because those things as much cultural aspurely linguistic.

The Handover

In case anyone hasn't heard, on July 1, 1997 Hong Kong ceases to be a British colony and becomes part of China again. The Hong Kong Standard has a daily countdown to handover and any movement in the Provisional Committee in Beijing is front-page news.

Speculation is rife as to what will happen. For the Internet, my guess is: business as usual. This is because the PRG gave up on keeping the Internet out of China several years ago Wirlimit it in Hong Kong if it's already booming on the mainland?

Schedules And Speakers

The hotels, trains, ferries, etc. in long Kong are very punctual. In a few instances the conference itself seemed to run on Romanian time. My session, for example, was given the go-haed half-an-hour late, and even though we stuck strictly to our speaking time intervals, in were informed before we were through that a wedding party had the room reserved for right now, and could we fin ish, please?

Fortunately, we didn't get to the conference in time to see what happened at tutorial registration; the story we heard == that it took so long people were eventually asked to their tutorials and come back later to treat

But despite a few such nits, the sessions were generally on time, and the speakers were almost ull very knowledgeable and good at cooveying their knowledge, and the attendess seen to think they got value for their money.

In a typical session, Marten Terpstra (former ly of RIPE, now of Bay Networks), spoke about

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routing tegistries. There are six big ones that pick up each others information and that together cover the world Registration is volun tary, an coverage is not universal, but the registries are quite useful

Andrew Partan spoke about building a big network. He was oned the first engineers hired at UUNET even before it started AlterNe which was one of the first two commercial IP networks (the other was PSINet), = he has some experience in that.

Incidentally, this column is coming is you via Hong Kong Supernet (URL: http://www.hlauet.com), which very conveniently provided guest accounts for APRICOT attendees.

Xing Li of Tsinghua University talked about CERNET, the Chinese network. It seems there are the same kinds of technical problems in China as everywhere else, plus X.25 is still lingering in spots

Toshiya Asaba of III talked about Abone, which is a regional met work they are doing: III was one of the first Japanese commercial ISPs In my session, I invited Guy Almes of ANS to discuss the IP Performance Measurements group, which he leads, and John Houlker of Waikato University in New Zealand to talk about the history and current developments of performance measurements in New Zealand, including NeTraMet, which in a network traffic metrics tool that is quite popular. I spoke about a wide range of MIDS Internet graphics People seemed to like the general topic of Internet monitoring and measurement, which is a satisfying development

Incidentally, this column is coming to you am Hong Kong Supernet (URL: http://www.hknet.com), which very conveniently provided puest accounts for APRICOT attendees.

For

APNIC

Friday of the same week, the Asia Pacific Network Information Center (APNIC) (URL: http://www.apnic ma) met. This m the group that dele gates IP network addresses for the region, coordinates domain 168 istnes, runs a WHOIS server, and generally acts as an IP networking coordinating body. It is perhaps most analogous to RIPE (URL http://www.rlpe.net) in Europe

APNIC is a quite formal membership body, and its meeting consist ed mainly of voting on executive committee members, reviewing finances, and the like. APNIC was the primary sponsor a APRICO and David Conrad had the perhaps unenviable position of running bath APRICOT and the APNIC meeting. The other sponsors are listed on the APRICOT web page (URL: http://www.apricot.net), which will by the time you read this, also have online proceedings.

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Online Guide

ONLINE SERVICES . BY BILL GRAM-REEFER

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It's not

enough that America Online has become America On Hold. Once you get there, you're liable to find some nasty stuff. It's not uncommon to find a band of brainless rowdies showing up in any given forum or chat room with user names like "Stang." "Beelzebub666," or "Pretty&16," knocking over the furniture in search of cohorts, adult conversation, OS flame wars, phone numbers of minors, and general disruption.

What's worse, with April 15 just around the corner, it's time to pony up in the Feds so they can continue to substidize access and attempt in regulate the chaos. But there are some bright spots, nonetheless.

Tax Help From Cyberspace

Losing sleep Tax Day? Fear not.
The Internet can help. Whether you carefully file your the records and

typically complete your return early, or you stuff everything into a shoe box and wait until the last minute of file for an extension, you'll find a trickload of valuable help of cyberspace.

First, let's look the beast square in the eye at take a quick survey of what's available from the internal Revenue Service (IRS). The IRS offers a wealth of forms and a literature, so even if you want to wait and April 15 to get your 1040-E form, you can download it and the Net by accessing http://www.ir.ustreas.go.planingtorms_publindex_html_More than 500 planingtorms_publindex_html_More than 500 forms_Evenythings_there even the observe stuff the wage statement forms for wages_earned in the Morethings.

Guam; and the forms come in a variety of formats, including Adobe Acrobat.

But that's not all. You can also find the tax regulations as plain English, find out how to file your return electronically directly to the IRS, or how 1040EZ form filers can submit returns using a touchtone telephone. The Tax Trails page (http://www.ustreas.gov/has/ct/ind-/nfo/tax-trails/) is the best place to start when hunting down tax info from the IRS. It provides an index of hot links that will connect you to news, help stats and more info Tax Trails also

Even if you want to wait until April 15 to get your 1040EZ form, YOU CAN DOWNLOAD IT

off the Net by accessing http://www.irs.ustreas.gov/plain/ forms_pub/index_html

EVERYTHING'S there, even the obscure stuff like wage statement forms for wages earned in Guam.

offers hypertext links to answers and background explanation to a variety of common tax topics including moving expenses, exemptions, interest deductibility, or how to handle your children's income

If you don't care to visit with your voterfriendly IRS Web site, you can also get the forms from other sources, tocluding http:// www.scubed.com/tax/emuil and http://
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If you want to find tax advice on the laters you'll find hundreds of thousands of sum from research institutes, law firms spreading in tax matters, professional tax preparation agencies, accounting firms, and non-profiled cational organizations, just do a NetSearché your browser and enter "rax" "IIS" and publicitierally). Always be very careful wheener poviding information about your business, yourself online, and check out the reference anyone providing tax services over the lates.

A good place to start is with some of the beter-known "brand names" in the tax consul-start is the tax consul-start in tax consul-start in the tax consul-start in tax consul-st

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can purchase Lasset's it.

Income Tax 1996 == its Web site, along with Lasser's Monthly Tax Letter delivered to memail address every month for a par first. If Young, one of the "Big 8" account firms. This site (http://hwww.cy.com/us.assert.atx./htm) provides topics on the need) most common tax preparation errors, grant fund fax-saving strategies, Ten Smart particular for the second control of the s

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Online Services continued

Planning Tips, fifty easily overlooked deductions, and Important tax changes for 1996. Or, you could put your own tax dollars to good work by asking the IRS any question you want

You might also look into working with some tax preparation software. Two good choices for small-office or home-office (SOHO) businesses

are TurboTax (Windows) and MacInTax (Mac) Both are from Intuit (http:// www.intu(t.com), the leader in personal accounting software. Both packages guide you through what data you

need with plain-English, context-sensitive advice on key matters. One of the critical features of most of these tax preparation products is the "Interview." The interview asks you the fundamental questions and offers tips and instruction on where to put which num-

bers. Then it checks for errors and omissions Forms for the various State tax documents are supplied, and once you're done, you'll be able to file your tax returns electronically. Even if you work with a tax consultant, these packages are an excellent way w create a first draft that will certainly save you fees you might otherwise pay a high-priced tax consultant.

Be VERY CAREFUL whenever providing information about your business or yourself online, and

> CHECK OUT the references of ANYONE providing tax services over the Internet.

Costoni Forum Feature On Delphi

Meanwhile, Delphi Internet Services Corp has made it easier for friends, families and busi nesses to get online for discussion and chat and actually manage to keep the uninvited out Delphi Internet's new Custom Forum products enable you to set up private forums. Web was and even that rooms. This is especially valuable own dedicated mail list, BBS or Web serven

The Message Board can be configured using your own Web browser to allow access from

group of participants, restricted by unique passwords You can se up different topics and threads I truly Dilbertian Topic Control for ture lets you even restrict certain topics to certain subsets of sub scribers, so engineers within a



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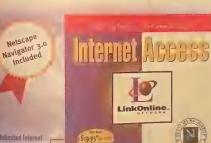
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company could have a forum where marketing was not allowed Alternatively, company executives could have a secure place to renew confidential documents concerning which engineers could be down sized. Families could even reserve a private thread to discuss sensine topics like Mom's cooking.

Topic Control can also be extended to the Custom Web Site capabilities included in the package. Hosts can create Web pages and quitem to the entire Internet, or limit access to Custom Forum members in cream a subset of members. Thus, you could have a page to help create a better sense of community that is accessible only by your very best customers.

Chat capabilities are also available to enable your loose affiliation of millionaires and billionaires to discuss price-fixing opportunites in real time. As in most chat rooms, participants can see who else from the group in participating and send them an instant message in addition to taking part in the general chat. Just as with the Forums, a host can decide on advance who can and cannot participate in certain live discussions. Once an account has been activated a host uses any Web browser to administer the threads, chats and pages, including defining users, groups and passwords.

The forums use "cookies" to maintain navigation and access control around the site. Attendance and instant messaging as written a law applets and can be downloaded into a browser on an an-needed basis. A Starter Custom Forum consisting of a message board costs \$16 for the first six months and \$5 per month thereafter. The Chat feature costs \$15 per month. To get started, contact Delphi Internet at http://www.udelphi.com.or.call 1-800-695-4001

America Offline?

Finally, if your New Year's resolution was to wearn yourself off open space for a more analog existence, you'll still need a manual Check out A.J. Jacob's America Offline: The Complete Outernet Stater fit (paperback, 120p, Cader Books, \$8.95; ISBN 0-8362-2433-7) In America Offline, Jacobs reveals the secrets to living without modern keyboards, avatars, and cranky browser software. From the basics, like how to master obscure devices like #I pencils—"user-friendly word processors that come complete with unlimited fonts and an automatic save function"—you'll also find out how to do more advanced task like access thousands of newspapers and magazines, and get willing ed free mail delivered to your door by an acrual human being ever day of the week (except Sundays) Jacobs' manual shows you low to suff the Outerell, where five billion members exchange mail, chair play games every day, including the World Wide World.

Sitep-by-step, Jacobs shows you how to sign-off cyberspace and become a card-carrying member of America Offline You'll learn about user names, your new reality-based desktop, making connections with people, how to use the mail function, cut-and-paste, attach files, hit tetrat, was where to look for documentation. It's are all hard work either, as you'll learn how to participate in a variety of interactive games, access news, shop, find safe places for your kids to visit, and how to handle mission-critical stuff including sex and romance, as acids as your monty and self-as your monty.

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BY MICHELLE V. RAFTER

Beyond Netbay

Teacher Training Needed For Classroom Internet

Laguna Hills

High School has seventy-eight teachers, but none know the Internet ■ well as ■ pair of teenaged student workers. Son Bernardino City School District has 2,000 teachers, but ■ of mid-October, only twenty of them have taken the Internet training courses the district offers. Of approximately 28,000 teachers in Los Angeles public schools, less than half have Los Angeles Unified School District email accounts, and ■ mere stxty-five have home pages on the official district web site.

When it comes to the Internet, some educators know less than the students they're supposed to be teaching

in California and the rest of the country, billions of dollars and millions of hours are being spent wining schools to the Internet, through government mandates and volunteer insustives such me NetDay, a business-led, one-day cabling marathon ledd me mid-October that connected classrooms throughout the country to the Net.

getting the equipment is just the beginning. For teachers to incorporate the Internet into Jesson plans, they have to know how to init but where to look for incoming white most of America's elementary and secondary school teachers haven't acquired.

It's a huge issue, we experts contend threatme to undermine the work that's already been done weget schools online

"All the money we're spending an equipment will be ineffective if teachers can't translate that into their day-to-day practice," are a Randel Ryder, author of Internet for Educators, and a professor of education at the University of Wisconsin to Milwaukee

If that tune sounds familiar, it's because

education experts and others have crooned for years about the failure of personal computers to live up to their protential in the classroom due to inadequate teacher training if teachers' internet literacy doesn't improve, authorities believe, schools could be in for a repeat performance

Roadblocks

For some teachers, the stumbling block is access. They can't or won't learn until their classrooms or schools have enough network connections and PCs.

For others, it's a question of time, or fear of the unknown Younger teachers are more likely to have received some type of computer training in school, but for the most part, teachers who've been working for a while aren't as familar with computers and the Internet, according to education authorities

Still others remain unconvinced the Internet is the important classroom tool it's made out to be, preferring to concentrate instead on tried and-true teaching methods

The lack of teacher Internet training int lost on the powers that be. The Clinton administration, national teachers groups and the National Parent Feacher Association are supporting an initiative called 21st Century Teacher that plans to train 100,000 educators to teach 500,000 other teachers.

about computers, software and the Internet

Forward-thinking states such as Florida. Texas, West Virginia and Maryland have begun requiring that public funds earmarked for school technology improvements be used for teacher training as well as hardware

In California, Gov Pete Wilson recently proposed a SI billion, four-year, public/private funds inuanwe to increase computer technologs in public schools. Last summer, a state education technology task force unveiled a four-year SII billion proposal to bring public schools up to technological smulf, including S2 3 billion for teacher training and support. But until the proposal is approved and funded, training California teachers about email, the Web and other aspects of the Internet remains sportly

Filling The Gap

Some schools are taking unusual steps to fill the knowledge gap until === 1 teachers are up to speed One = Saddleback Valley Unified School District in south Orange County, which is hiring Internet-savvy students to work as computer technicians.

At Laguna Hills High School, students And)
Mecham, 17, and Aditya Bansod, 15, each make
\$8.16 im hour formatting hard drives, programming software, making network connections
and answering internet questions from teachers

For teachers to incorporate the Internet into lesson plans, they have to know how to use it and where to look for resources online—skills most of America's elementary and secondary school teachers laven't acquired.

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Beyond NetDay continued

redundents. Bansod, a sophomore from Laguna Hills, helps maintain redunct's official Web site. Mecham, a senior from San Clemente, us made house calls to help teachers set up their home PCs. "The genoments what they do, it's what don't they do," says Frank Manzo, excent principal.

Mecham and Bansod say they know two Laguna Hills teachers who low how to write Web pages, and another half-dozen who use the latunet in class. About half of the school's teachers have received keepype of Internet training, according to school officials.

The teenagers, both of whom grew up with computers, have a hard time relating to their technophobic teachers. "Some have had bad operance with computers and just don't want to deal with it," Mediam suggests.

Students, on the other hand, are jumping at the chance, he adds: When the teachers aren't looking, they log on."

Nike Barnes, a social sciences teacher who claims to be "the leadings badite of the school," grudgingly began using a computer several
tars back to print out class assignments. He's connected to the
bomet at home and school, but hasn't made the time to integrate a
teach is class." It's not the kind of thing you jump into at the beginning
of the year."

Joint Ventures

1

when school districts are beginning to offer training directly, or through Sanarships with community groups and Internet access providers Last year, the San Bernardino City Unified School District joined the Saluctional Technology Development Consortium, a project created by San Bernardino county schools to train teachers on the Internet

as of October, only twenty San Bernardino teachers had enrolled, bothle number was expected to jump after January 1, when thanks to asiz million state grant, all schools in the district should start getting seed, according to Linda Smith, the district's education technology director. Once that happens, teachers can attend courses during choice, while substitutes take over their classroom duties.

Usual they try it, many teachers are reluctant to jump online. Smith

they ve heard it's hard. But once we show them how to find

resignation, they don't want to leave."

the Los Angeless school district offers Internet courses every quarter around the technology training labs, and sends instructors out to seems that ask for special help, says Andy Rogers, educational technology training labs, and sends instructors out to seem the second technology division. The classes are free and some are worth credits toward pay raises, be safe, Ifowever, he can't say how many of the 5,000 teachers who took disease enrolled in Internet courses.

The need for teacher training has attracted a number of companies that see it as an opportunity to do good, and make a buck. Apple Computer, a major player in the classroom computer market, has endoged an Internet training kit that's now available.

Internet Road Show

of the leaders in the Internet teacher training business at the Son Connect, a Lancaster, PA company that holds ten seminars in California, more than in any other state, according to Son Connect, the company's conference director





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exhers. Many teachers who come to the classes are "early adopters," refirst in their schools to use the Internet A majority of them go tise and train their colleagues. Noon explains

Not everyone is enthusiastic, he adds. "Teachers have concerns thou a visual-based approach to education, whether it provides the abal skills they feel students need. They've heard there's porn (on the mappropriate. Or they're worried about (their computers) getting a Paus. And they have a lot of time issues

But by 3 pm, when it's to leave, they're so jazzed and excited, they RETEAS a way to build excitement in their classrooms."

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Teachers Using Time Tools Successful Classroom Internet

TEACHERS WHO USE THE INTERNET IN THEIR CLASSROOMS ARE STILL THE Exception, not the rule.

last school year, John Patten did such a good job teaching kinder-Geneners and first graders how to publish on the World Wide Web, he's ot a new job teaching their teachers.

Patten, 31, is on loan from the San Bernardino City Unified School elistrict to an internet teacher training program operated by the district and several partners. As a reading and language arts instructor at Uncoln Banantary School in San Bernardino last school year, Patter helped Ryestryear-olds create # Web-based coloring book Students designed # Fights on the computer and with the help of mi upper-grade tutor, wrote sentence to describe it, then uploaded the picture to the Web After Patter announced the project on several education Usenet newsgroups. the class collaborated on the book with a school a Philadelphia

Creaming up internet projects was be time-consuming, which turns one teachers off, Patten says "You always want to know before you get to it have is this going to help me? ** does if do better? I think people beginning to see that the Net can | I things for you that the old Gon't provide.

Stacy Sinciair, 29, a science teacher at Middle School is Sherman lets CA taught herself how to use email in graduate school Because Wash t connected to the Los Angeles Unified School Districts net long until mid october, Sinciair was limited to using email from home. and for communicating with students and parents after school

Once the school's online, Sinciair expects to use the connection to par-Legate in a marine biology program sponsored by University of California. Angeles, that will allow her seventh-grade students to post results of wat will allow her seventh-grade students to be with a studies and other research to the Web and compare it with angs from other schools.

The internet has changed how I teach," Sinclair says. "I see much more reasis on the science of the process instead of memorizing facts Dut The science of the process instead of memorate that, but I seemender more? I don't have anything to substantiate that, but I seemender more? I don't have anything to substantiate that, but I seemender more? I don't have anything to substantiate that, but I seemender more? I don't have anything to substantiate that, but I seemender more? I don't have anything to substantiate that, but I seemender more? I don't have anything to substantiate that, but I seemender more? I don't have anything to substantiate that, but I seemender more? I don't have anything to substantiate that it is the there's a lot more interest in what we do in the classroom than then I saight more traditionally .

-Attichette V. Rafter





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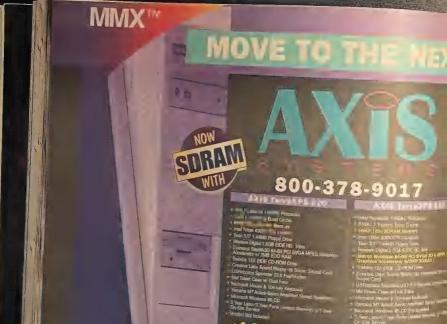
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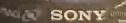


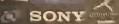
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 Learning Multimedia Online SFSU's New Program By Tony Reveaux176

attained the state of being digital, the theory goes, a doesn't make any type of media you're attempting to ship over the Net; it's all the same. just bits.

In practice, it's quite a bit messier than that for a number of reasons. However, judging from the volume of press releases I get about a webcast of this and a netcast of that, the dream of

every wannabe media mogul is to ship bits-and ship them live-of whatever event they've got their digitizers was Unfortunately, that's usually exactly what commout the other end-bits of the event

Over the past few months. I've succumbed to the lure of some of those press releases and attempted to check out a variety of live events over the Web. The concept of being able to make an end-run around the constrictions of



The Be-In Webcast

the broadcasting system and present your own event to the public is a mighty powerful one. I'm all for it.

However, just as the broadcasting system falls short of meeting certain ideals, so too-at this time-does the Web Broadly speaking these shortfalls aug in two areas: Some are purely technical basically the inability

The Digital Be-In As Case History



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SO YOU WANNA BE IN WEBCRSTING? CONCENSE!

to handle a large number of bits, while some are outside the sphere of the Web, being instead issues of production management.

Beyond that, but associated-if webcasting is your goal, note that we already live in a world of info glut, and that the problem of letting your audience know how to find you needs some attention. Also, paradoxically, you'd better be ready for a huge response.

Another practical issue is how you're going to finance both your event and webcast without falling into the same trap that commercial (and increasingly non-commercial) broadcasting lives in: having to appeal to the lowest common market denominator to keep the advertisers happy. There are also more philosophical questions of how much of the real essence of an event can be transmitted to a screen at a remote locationquestions that have m practical counterpart, perhaps even something approaching an answer, when it comes to designing the interface

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January's Ninth Annual Digital Be-In, togeth-

er with its attendant webcast, illustrated all these issues, and presented some possible

GETTING THERE

Strangely enough, my voyage to the Digital Be-In's webcast began with the Olympics bombing last year. I heard the news of the bombing from a television while drinking port at a wine bar. Suddenly, drinking port lost its appeal, and I went home to explore the question that had been on my mind for a while. "How good to the Web as a source for breaking news?"

It turned out to be on the high side of moderate. While obviously not m immediate or ubiquitous as television-it does take longer to write than to talk, and Web are not scattered around as widely as TV sets-words and pictures of the bombing appeared fairly fast, well within the hour, on the major news organizations' Web sites.

In fact, there was most noticeable improvement over television coverage; I didn't waste my time watching either a semi-hysterical or portentously calm talking head of a reporter repeating the same minimal information over and over again. On the Web, the information simply presented without the irritating personality overtones of an anchor person.

Video is not necessarily an improvement over text when presenting me event, as Michael Gosney, executive producer and creative director of the Digital Be-In, also later observed, although it does offer a certain viscerality that is

It was also interesting to watch the way the news spread around the world, International news organizations like CNN along with the location-of-the-crime-based Atlanta Journal were on the story fastest. In the Bay Area, the Chronicle and Examiner's Gate site easily posted the news long before San Jose's Mercury Center, although the posting was basically only

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the wire report. Some Asian papers' sites started to pick up on it, but there wasn't a thing on the European papers' sites for quite while It was daybreak in Europe, and obviously the main night shift at the morning papers had just gone home, leaving the Web sites unattended

Here is area where both network and local television, with their continual broadcast, can readily maintain an edge over a newspaper's Web site. Conversely, if a newspaper wanted to staff-up for continuous news coverage, that might be an expense, but it would not be a major technological obstacle.

The two main implications for webcasting are, firstly, that the duration, unpredictability and location of the event are key to determining how, and perhaps whether, to webcast it, secondly, if one is the consumer of the information, one does best to look for news either where the event is originating from or on a major international news organization's site. This may bring you much closer to the news than you could get via the choices available on your television,

although CNN will probably always be a contender in one form or another

By the way, the official Olympics site totally useless for this type of information; the line between real news organizations and public-relations window dressing was immediately clearer than ever.

What followed was several months of attempting to check out live webcasts of the less newsy variety-concerts and conferences for the most part, events where the organizers had control of the event. Public relations events, if you will.

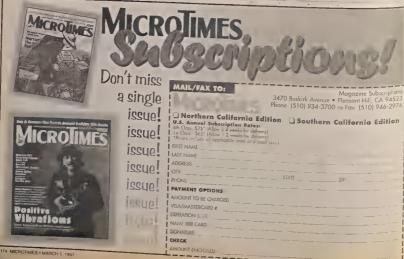
Something went horribly and frustratingly wrong almost every time. The servers might be overwhelmed and unable to even dribble out the required packets of audio and video informanon-sometimes they couldn't even dribble out text' Other times, some required plug-in or arcane technical item would be missing at my end. Sometimes my machine would crash, apparently just because Netscape's stock was down that day. My ISP might be having a busy day, or the Net as a whole might have turned to sludge.

All told, I was so unimpressed with the whole practice of live webcasting that I could no longer take even the theory of it very senously And then I got to the Digital Be-In's webcast

There were lots of things about it that didn't work very well-but enough was working that i was getting the same that people were having a pretty good time at the event itself. I sat at home wondering whether I shouldn't just get off my butt and go there in person. Suddenly it became clear that what I was experiencing through my computer was what was hyped as interactive television a few years ago. Gosney and his seems al crews of technicians and artists had actually managed to set up at least a primitive interactive television studio, and were beaming out their '90s-style dance party!

VIRTUAL STUDIO TOUR

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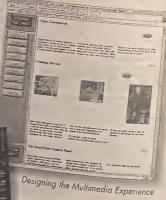


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Multimedia Studies Program

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employed everything from Centris 650s to PowerMac 8500s in development," explains Robert Todd, director of the On-Line Development Center. "Because we are creating multimedia content, there's really no other choice. The Macintosh is the only computer platform which allows us to fully integrate all of those media types in authoring and to de it

In terms of Macintosh software, he continues, "I don't think there in anything that we don't use." The production teams work with standards like Adobe Photoshop, Illustrator and DeBabelizer, and all of the online authoring



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widgets that are out there, including Web edltors like PageMill and Claris HomePage.

They have used Macromedia Director for Shockwave animations, programs like Strata and Infini-D to create 3-D objects and Adobe Premiere to create and edit video sequences. Tools like Sound Designer and Macromedia SoundEdit 16 have been employed m create and prepare audio content and compression. using RealAudio for applications such as the instructors' voices which introduce and annotate each course.

PCS AND MISSION CONTROL

Macs give way to PCs in the server area for the department on the 26th floor, which looks like

an informal mission control center. There is a mail server for mail and an FTP server for files, one machine that supports the Illustra database and then one that runs the Web server. There is a RealAudio server and a chai server and a tracking machine that oversees the site's traffic. These are all Windows NTbased computers from Digital, Micron and Dell.

"We put up our isolated dedicated T1 line so that no one else may take out any of our needed bandwidth," says Jasper Steudel, project manager. *Now we have gone from one to two TI lines to provide a backup line. We are also going from a service provider to a more traditional telecom provider They're more expensive, but at least they can guarantee good and reliable service. The young startups tend to oversell their T1 connections and then subscribe more dialup connections than they can support."

With a program of this magnitude and complexity a back-end database was needed so that instructors could respond to students' queries and comments and to be able to make changes without having to go through a Web master "We chose Informix Illustra," says systems spe cialist Randy Kessler, "because in im object-oriented properties and functions, elements for particular types of media can be inherited throughout the database and displayed on the Web . The instructor was be anywhere in the world and go into a special academic URL and be accepted into a forms interface, where he 180 MICROTIMES - MARCH 5, 1997

can update and make changes to the course material and layout, which will all be instantly reflected in the accessed course.

LIVING IN THE FUTURE

At the same time that they are doing produc tion, the San Francisco State teams are expenmenting with multiple technologies such as Java, Shockwave Streaming Audio, Flash and RealAudio. They are intensely testing various delivery systems for video such as VDO and Streaming QuickTime Video.

"When we did our prototype," says Todd, "we were counting matechnologies that people were just saying were going to be available. If you are going to be ready to run those technologies in a

"Because we are creating multimedia content, THERE'S REALLY NO OTHER CHOICE.

THE Macintosh is the only computer platform which allows us to fully integrate all of those media types in AUTHORING AND TO GO IT WELL."

> -Robert Todd. director of the On-Line Development Center

useful way when they are around, you have to start thinking about them when they are just in the conceptual stage. In this field you really have to be able to anticipate what's going to be happening in the most eighteen months."

MULTIMEDIA TEACHING MULTIMEDIA

Depending on the topics, the Multimedia Studies Program's courses and tutorials on the Web use different page layouts of text, graphics and photos.

The Organic Online studio of San Francisco m redesigning the interface. RealAudio brings on the voices of the instructors and experts, and there is some QuickTime and ShockWave and lava animation. In the courses, students communicate to teaching assistants and instructors through email and chat. What makes instrucnon the Web unlike any previous method a the profuse implementation of integrated links m hundreds of up-to-date resources that bring you in sync with industry and the media community

In its first semester last Fall the On-Line program launched three courses "Demystifying Multimedia Technology" is taught by Todd He introduces you to the hardware and software tools used in multimedia design and authoring with information and resources to help you choose your setup. Learn the difference between RAM and ROM and what all the other names and numbers mean to the business of making multimedia.

Seth Restaino, who teaches "Introduction = Director," has worked as a 3-D artist, digital video editor and sound editor and has designed, produced and managed digital media projects such as CRUSH, PICASSO and educational multimedia products at Red Hill Studios.

His course tackles the core elements of the Macromedia Director authoring environment from the stage, castmembers

and Lingo, so you can learn the fundamentals of movie-making and how 10 produce a stand-alone application An accompanying CD-ROM provides 3 series of exercises in Director design and development.

Sam McMillan is a senior producer at vivid publishing and is a vereran of more than four dozen interactive projects at the SoftAd Group and

has written for Communications Arts. Online Design and Ad Age's Creativity magazine His course, "Designing the Multimedia Experience," examines some of the design issues that multimedia producers face, such & the use of dialog, choosing appropriate media and maintaining continuity. His lessons take you through interface design, design conven tions, interactive modes and information organization. He brings you through all the conceptual and practical steps for designing 3 document, and for understanding the entire process so that you can work better with others in the industry

Two new tutorials have been added this semester "History of Multimedia From Wagner to Virtual Reality" examines the concepts and the history of the integration of artistic forms with technology and issues in new media A multimedia timeline illuminates the concepts and contributions of artists such as Wagner John Cage and Laurie Anderson, innovations in sound and music and traditional, experimental and computer animation. It traces the development of computers from Babbage to the

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MultiMedia & BEYOND

Learning Multimedia Online continued.

Macintosh, and the shapes and directions of new media design.

I'm teaching a course too: "Multimedia in Action: Platforms, Products & Solutions" introduces you to the elements of multimedia communication, and its publishing and distribution platforms and media. Explore the differences between Macs and PCs and the advantages and disadvantages of shipping on floppies, CD-ROMs and DVD and of public displays from kiosks and videowalls to VR and the World Wide Web as a distribution medium

LIVE AND LEARN

The SFSU staff has learned a lot from the first startup semester. They'd initially thought that their

students would be ordine for about two hours, and then do a lot of content browsing, and then do exercises online. In practice, they tend to be online for about half an hour-their apparent concentration span-so the school has divided all the lessons into half-hour segments.

"We've talked to various consultants and experts, notes Steudel, "but nobody

really knows what works for online education

Within two years there will be about forty courses online enabling you to earn the Certificate of Completion in Multimedia Studies, Enrollment for a single online multimedia class at SFSU is currently being set at 100, "It could be 500 or 1,000. We could accept 10,000," adds. Todd, "it's not the technology that limits us; it's the instructional management. We want to keep it level for the time being. We are making sure that students are supported with experts to answer their questions. That's the challenge, that the teacher can answer that many emails."

CONSTRUCTION GUIDES

There's certainly nothing like being involved in online production to make you take a closer MICROTIMES - MARCH 5 1997



History of Multimedia

What makes instruction on the Web unlike ANY previous method is the profuse implementation of integrated links to hundreds of up-to-date

RESOURCES THAT BRING YOU IN SYNC WITH industry and the NEW MEDIA COMMUNITY.

> look at Web design. But even when you're surfing the Web, you see the endless variety of design ideas and the wide range of quality in which the sites are executed.

Two recent books address these issues, Crystal Waters' Web Concept and Design: A Comprehensive Guide for Creating Effective Web Sites (New Riders, 277 pp. \$39.99) and Elements of Web Design by Darcy DiNucci with Maria Giudici and Lynne Stiles (Peachpit Press, 205 pp, \$39.95) are both well-written and welldesigned, but they represent two very different approaches to online construction

For the arust, the single designer and those who are coming in the Web from graphics or other disciplines, Waters' book is a welcome guide and resource. In addition all the ele-

ments of tags and frames, you will find generous and accessible attention to concept, tone, text, color, imagery and expression. For the business and corporate environment where several people may divide the responsibilities of integrating a Web site into am organization DiNucci's book will help clarify the process. It includes alternate page formats, programming, interactivity, multimedia and mi HTMI reference

No sooner do you get into the design process then you will want to bring in documents and resources from all over And then they don't fit Converting Content for Web Publishing Time Saving Tools and Techniques by Januar Warner, Ken Milburn and Jessica Burdman (New Riders, 761 pp + CD ROM, \$49.99) helps you to coax, trick and arm-wrestle all of these mynad elements into being Web-compliant The

CD-ROM is loaded with PC and Mac utilities and converters that will back you up in your Web-wrangling career.

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RESOURCES:

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San Francisco, CA 94105 (415)904-7700 URL: http://msp.sfsu.edu

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Effectors, Filters, And Lightning

New LightWave 3D Plug-ins

ince the introduction of plug-In support in LightWave 3-D, many thirdparty companies have released cool products that significantly enhance this 3D animation program. Here's a look at a few of them WaveFilter Net+-Vertilectric, and Surface Effectors.

WAVEFILTER NET+

Mike Reed's WaveFilter was one of the very first LightWave 3D plug-ins to bit the market, and has just been upgraded significantly, It allows LightWave users to process frames while rendering, which might otherwise require utilizing a separate image-processing program. This is possible because of the program's RGB, brightness, contrast, and gamma adjustments

WaveFilter also enhance the appearance of an image by increasing the difference in color between two edges. If the image-processing-like options are random luminance noise, postenzing, NTSC color limit, grayscale conversion, negative, and image filpping. However, WaveFilter's effects can be applied independently to the background, objects.



Example of Wavefilter's depth-of-field processing

WaveFilter can also ENHANCE the appearance of an image by increasing the difference in color between two edges.

shadows, and/or a color range

CO

OT

WaveFilter also enhances some of LightWaves own capabilities. The Blur option allows you to simulate an outof-focus look, while Depth-of-Field Blur varies the amount of blur based upon an object's distance from a specified focal point.

WaveFilter also includes some Antialias options that can be used maddition to LightWave's own AA features. Moreover, WaveFilter's AA seems to be marginally faster than using the enhanced versions of LightWave's AA with similar results.

The 100% Black and 100% White options allow you to create alpha mattes or clipmap files automatically. The resulting images will either mask out all objects or the visible background. Of course, you could accomplish these tasks using just LightWave, but with WaveFilter it's much easier and faster.

The Negative Alpha option reverses what m normally saved m alpha









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MultiMedia & BEYOND

EFFECTORS, FILTERS, AND LIGHTNING CONTINUES

channel image. The Range Alpha option lets you set a range of RGB colors to be painted black, while other areas are set to absolute white. This could be handy with green/blue screen images, but it's not very Interactive and takes a while to get the right settings.

The Luminance Key Preparation option was designed for a situation where the graphics will be lumi-keyed over graphics-that is, keyed over video using brightness values.

WaveFilter Net+ also allows you to modify its setting using null objects. The product includes several pre-configured null-object scenes that you can just load into Layout using LightWave's "Load from scene" option.

With the exception of the FocalRange and FocalPoint nulls, WaveFilter settings are taken from the null objects Z position-the X and Y values are ignored. Thus, the nulls can be set up in what the documentation calls a "mixing

WaveFilter's effects can be applied independently to the background, objects. shadows, and/or a color range.

board" fashion when viewed from overhead.

The FocalPoint null specifies the distance from the camera which will be the center of the area which is in perfect focus. The FocalRange null specifies the near and far edge of the perfect-focus area. Blur is applied to things outside of the perfect-focus area. You can easily get a very cool "rack focus" effect simply by moving the FocalPoint

WaveFilter a implemented as four independent plug-ins. This allows you at Independently apply different WaveFilter settings to and mage-you might want in a one thing to the background and another to the objects. This feature also allows you to set multiple color ranges which may be helpful with green/blue THE MICHOTIMES - MARCH 5, 1997

WaveFilter makes a lot of image-enhancement chores much easier to accomplish, and you'll probably find a reason to use it with just about every scene you render. I'd say this is a staple for any LightWave user. (Note: The non-Net+ version of WaveFilter excludes ScreamerNet support, a blur option, noise, and use of nulls.)

VERTILECTRIC

VertiLectric is a cool plug-in that I first saw demoed by Bryan Blevins at NAB in the NewTek booth. Basically, it's a lightning effect generator featuring both geometric and image processing abilities.

On the Modeler side, you can quickly create lightning bolts. It also makes cool-looking trees and other "branching" type plants, albeit sans leaves. The basic detail level of a boltcan be defined using segment length or number of subdivisions. The complexity of the branching is determined by setting the Twist and Branches values. Additionally, there

are randomizing options, including a numerical "seed" setting.

By default, Vertilectric creates an object using two-point polygons. This can save some memory and rendering time, but can look unnatural depending on the situation. So, you can also make the branching three-dimensional by specifying the number of polygon sides. Furthermore, you can set branch radius, with separate start and ending values. You can even have VertiLectric make a bolt out of spline curves, which you was for (manual) rail

A really cool feature lets you set the "course" of a balt by merely selecting points. Vertilectric will create a bolt that follows the path. Bolts can even be made morphable by keeping certain parameters the same, an easy procedure concisely spelled out in the manual

The Layout-side of Vertilectric is even cooler. It allows you to generate electrical charges that are between two points, based on the distance between them. You can have up to 1,000 source points and a larget points & point is generally a Null object, but could in a regular object. A target can be use object, light, or seem

the camera. What's more, a source point can be the target of another source!

The source object is defined by loading the VertiLectric plug-in for that object From there you are presented with an easy-to-understand requestor that lets you select any of the available target objects, lights, or the camera, by simply clicking un it.

Targets are generally only struck when they are within a user-specified range. However, you

MI



Using Vertilectric to make a plasma ball

have the option of striking all of the targets in range, the nearest, or a single random strike

You also have the ability independently set whether a target me be struck on a frame by-frame basis using the Strike Sequence panel. There are also provisions for randomly setting the Strike Sequences for a selected group of targets.

A Strike Sequence man also be exported as a LightWave envelope file. This can be loaded Into a light an it will flash in sync with the light ning. Man! What a feature!

Each bolt's appearance was be and indepen dently for each target. As in the Modeler coun terpart, there are segment length, branches twist, shape seed, and branch seed settings in the panel. This is also where you set the strike radius, which determines when a target is in range. There are options available to randoml) set the shape and branching seeds, so each bolt looks different. Any LightWave surface file can be used to texture bolts. Plus, the surface can life different for different targets

Target parameters and be saved to a file and loaded later. There are copy and paste functions for quickly applying parameters a specific tar

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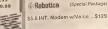
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EFFECTORS, FILTERS, AND LIGHTNING continued

gets or you can copy individual parameters to all targets. You can even set the default target parameters.

Points2Nulls is a so-called "bonus" plug-in This Modeler plug-in converts up to 900 selected points into a LightWave scene file with Null objects corresponding to the points. Why do this? Well, it makes it much easier (and faster) to place Targets, particularly when they are located near == object's surface. The plug-in can optionally parent all of the Nulls to a "parent" Null, which would make it easy to handle a buge group of Nulls. You == even set the Layer color to use for quick visual Identification.

VertiLectric is an incredible piece of software and thoroughly thought out. I bet it was heavily beta tested, because it seems to include everything. I was amazed that you can even see the effect of VertiLectric in Layout as well as in a Preview Animation. (This is because VertiLectric creates the actual geometry == the fly.) Amazing! The only critical comment I?I make is that I wish it had some graphical way to set the parameters with a mouse. I always have # hard time remembering freeform numerical-input settings.

SURFACE EFFECTORS

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Surface Effectors m a brand new LightWave 3D plug-in. Basically, Surface Effector allows you to dynamically change surface values over time.

This is achieved by using specially named Null objects. For any surface that has the "Surface_Effector" shader plug-in set, these Null objects will modify its surface. The surface attributes that can be changed are diffusion.

luminance, color, refraction index, specularity, transparency, and reflectivity. Fractal noise Surface Effectors for adding fractal textures to surfaces have been added recently.

Effector Nulls can also have a maximum and munimum radius of influence. That is, surfaces at the maximum distance from the null will be barely affected; those at a minimum distance will receive the full effect. Surfaces in between the two distance settings will be partially affected. Optionally, the maximum value

can be set less than the minimum. This yields a "ring" based on the two settings, which falls off in intensity on either side. The effect can have an adjustable "soft" edge, as well in an abrupt "clipped" border.

In addition to being able to vary the effect based on relative distance, you see also directly manipulate ## Effector's values by parenting # "child attribute-nuil" to an Effector Null. An Attribute-null, like a Surface Effector null. ## just a null object that uses special keywords for its name. You can fade # "parent" Surface Effector of out, ## well ## change its diffusion, luminance, color, refraction index, specularly, transparency, reflectivity, and maximum and minimum radius of influence values. Most of these are based ## the ## position value of the child null. Cotor changes ### the ## to the N. Y. and Z coordinates for the R, G, B values, respectively How clevrif.

You can also parent Surface Effector nulls to each other The parent will then influence the

child. This allows you to, say, have a Surface Effector null parented to another Surface Effector null which is being controlled by a child attributenull It's kind of like a family (not mine, of course) where mos kid (the attributenull) manipulates his mother (a Surface Effector), who in turn reprimands the other son (also a Surface Effector). That made sense, didn't it? One limitation m that currently Surface Effectors cannot modify procedural or texture map surface setlings; therefore, the affected surface parameters get replaced with pure surface settings. However, was author,



Added electric bolt with VertiLectric to Surface Effector demo scene Also used Wavefilter's enhance filter to bring out details of ship

Points2Nulls is a so-called "BONUS" plug-in. This Modeler plug-in converts up to 900 selected points into a LightWave scene file with Null objects corresponding to the points. Why do this? Well, it makes it much easier (and faster) to place Targets, particularly when they are located mear an object's surface.

Prem Subrahmanyam, plans to correct this in a version, 1.1 It will also include a GUI, variable a edging, his inclinance, and saturation adjustments, and the ability a tig specific Effectors to specific surfaces. There



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EFFECTORS, FILTERS, AND LIGHTNING constitued from page 1711

Surface Effectors is a brand new LightWave 3D plug-in. Basically, Surface Effector allows you to dynamically change surface values over time.

will also be a Modeler plugin that will convert selected points it among the convert selected points in a convert selected points in the convert selected points in th bank of Surface Effectors. The GUI will be really nice because it can get quite tedious (and confusing) editing the object name even time you need to adjust a setting.

I can't even begin to describe all of the things you can do with this product. You basically have total dynamic control over individual surface settings. I just love the spaceship defense-shield demo scene and the burning paper demo is extremely cool. Surface Effectors is definitely a must-have LightWave plug-in.

There you have it. Three very handy new plug-ins for Lightware 3D, each one extending your abilities exponentially. Contact the respective companies through the Internet if you and interested, the are very responsive.

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" Editor's Note:

When we debuted the MicroTimes Stock Index in 1991, our intention was not to offer investment advice, but rather to track the performance of publicly-traded companies we con sidered both interesting and representative of the persons computer industry of the time

Over the years, some of them have prospered and some falla by the wayside (for example, the original list included evenual acquisition targets Ashton-Tate and Aldus). At the same time we launch the online version of the Index, there are plenty of dynamic new companies we thought would be good addition to the mix (e.g. Netscape, Yahoo, and other Internet cortenders), not to mention the occasional media giant like Dung which once operated well outside the fold of the computer industry, but now exerts powerful force within the industry

Now = then, we're not presenting the list = investment advice but as an index of the personal computer industry's performance. We encourage you to stop by our Web site to check out the online version of the chart, updated each bull ness day, at www. microtimes.com/stockchart html.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average reached yet another milestone this month, climbing above the 7000 level for the first time in its history. The Dow Jones closed the month ended Febraury 13 at 7022.44, up 17857, of 2.61%. It was a rocky month for many technology stocks, as reflected in the NASDAQ Composite's slower growth rate, 0.48%, to close at 1370 81, up 6.53 points

The MicroTimes portfolio exhibited sluggish growth aining 79.96 points, or # 92% to close at a record high of 8809.79. Of the 40 stocks in the MicroTimes Index there were twenty-one gainers and nineteen decliners: thirteen companies reached annual highs, versus hree reaching 52-week lows.

Turning to the companies that made the month's

Bellsouth reached an agreement to purchase Areless Cable Atlanta Inc. for \$46.9 million, causing ne stock price to head into higher territory. The com any's stock closed the month at a week nigh of 16 88, up \$3 38 per share, or 7.76%, included in the eal are the rights to wireless cable TV licenses serving ne Atlanta area. This acquisition is good news lot otential video customers in Atlanta," said William F eddersen, Bellsouth Group President of Long Stance Wideo Services Bellsouth is eager to spand its quality video services in Atlanta, and this chnology is see excellent way in enter market

Dell Computer also watched its stock price increase February, closing at \$70.25, up \$6.69 per share of .52%. Dell Computer Corp. Chairman and CEO chael Dell said that overall personal sumputer mand continues to be "very good," and that he is infortable with current industry forecasts of 15-20%

unit growth worldwide over the next few years ypress semiconductor Corp. reported weak fourth arter performance, resulting in a -14 66% drop in company's stock price, shares of Cypress closed at orice of \$12.38, down \$2.13 per share. The CPU pro cer reported fourth-quarter earnings of \$113.1 1. up 3% from last quarter's revenue of \$1096 ml but down 36% from the year ago quarter's \$1773 ion, which remains a record for the company

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Computer of the Month

Panasonic's CF-62

This mon

I highlight a top-of-the-line computer with a top-of-the-line price. Perhaps it points to the future. The Panasonic CF-62 offers a rewritable optical cartridge called a PD (Power

Drive). The cartridges (\$50 each) hold 650MB of data and fits into the CD drive.

Before we get carried away with a description of the PD drive, let's come back down to earth and start at the beginning. The CF-62 is not one of the super-lightweight notebooks that are flooding the market. Rather, it is a heavy computer with all the associated advantages. Magnesium alloy houses the unit, and while it looks like plastic, it is much stronger. If you want something to fit into your hip pocket or purse, this is not the notebook for you. If, on the other hand, you want something with all the bells and whistles-and more-this may he just what you have been waiting for.

At 9.5 lbs. and measuring 11.7" # 9.4" x 2.4" what you get is a powerhouse. Powered by a 133MHz Pentium processor, It comes with a 1.35GB hard drive and 16MB of RAM, expandable to up to 48MB. In addition to the hard drive, there is the standard floppy drive and two PC Card slots. These card slots are set up to take two Type I or II cards or a single Type III card. When I inserted a Type III hard drive, the computer immediately recognized it. This is not the case with all computers. The bottom slot is configured to take a Zoomed Video LICROTIMES .

MPEG card (\$319) for quality video display.

The added size of this computer means Panasonic can include a great keyboard. Usually, I hate the keyboards that come with portables and pretty quickly connect a full-size keyboard. Even though I would still prefer a full-

The display is as large as they come on portables—12.1" diagonally.

size keyboard at my primary work location, you can comfortable and easily use this one in the field. A touch pad serves in lieu of a mouse and unlike some I have tested, this one worked well.

The display is as large as they come on

portables-12.1" diagonally. Plus, the screen high quality-an active matrix display with a resolution of 1024 x 768 pixels. This means that graphics and videos have amazing clarity You can still use m external monitor if you like, but the built-in one is more than adequate for most

of what you would do on a notebook

Panasonic decided to me a Lithium Ion battery pack that should last between two and four hours between charges, depending upon your use. There is also a nonreplaceable Nickel Metal Hydride battery that keeps you from losing power in an emergency. A suspend feature lets you power down and restart where you left off

While this computer scores high on each front, its unique feature is truly the combination 4X CD-ROM and optical storage drive. Pressing a button under the keyboard lifts up the keyboard and extends a CD-ROM tray You can load this with either 3 standard CD-ROM, a new DVD (Digital Video Disk), of the PD cartridge. The new

DVDs hold a huge amount of informationmaking possible to see whole motion pictures on a single disk. Coupled with a Zoomed Video card, true quality sound and video is possible on this laptop

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SPECIFICATION:

MODEM OPERATION

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Half or full-duplex ==== 2-wire dial-up **OPERATION** line.asyn chronous

Auto dial / answer, auto bauding, NMP10 UNKING

auto fall-back / forward RTS / CTS. XON / XOFF (software selectable) FLOW CONTROL COMPATIBILITY ■ 103; 212A, ITU-T V.21; V.22; V.23;

V.22bis; V.32; V.32bis; V.34; V.FC ERROR CORRECTION ITU-T V.42, MNP4 (auto match) DATA COMPRESSION ITU-T V.42bis, MNP5 (auto match)

RECEIVE SENSITIVITY -43 dBm COMMMAND SET Hayes AT and Escape sequence

2 configuration profiles, 4 sets by all digit tele MEMORY phone number

COMMAND BUFFER SSCharacters DIAGNOSTICS Power on self-test, V.54 loop test

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14400bps SPEED

COMPATIBILITY Group II with T.30 protocol ITU-T V.17; V.21 ch2; V.27ter: V.29

COMMMAND SET TR-29 Class 1

VOICE OPERATION

Simultaneous Voice and Data (SVD); TAM and Voice Mail

7.2 Khz using 2, 3 or 4 bits ADPCM; SAMPLING RATE 11.025 K hz linear PCM GENERAL

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gaming. Operates at 33,600 bps well as ITU-T V .34 28,800 bps.

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Laptops continued

The PD cartridge slips in just as easily == a CD and stores up == 650MB of data to the disk. The disk is rewritable, so it is well-suited to backups or extremely large video files. It is difficult to know whether optical technology will become common in portables of the future, but

it is surely a likely candidate as it is so convenient. The \$50 or like a for the carridge sounds like a lot, but compared to other removable media, it is inexpensive per unit of storage. After all, this cartridge holds over six times as much data as a Zip disk.

Of course, there is a jack for stereo input and stereo speakers are built into the unit. For superior stereo sound, however, you will need to use external speakers for which there are jacks. In addition to serial and parallel ports, there is also use infrared port to let you do wireless transfers.

Everything about the CF-62 is state-of-the-arr except the small operating instructions booklet. The reason for the booklet being so small is that a fully detailed operating manual is installed on the hard drive during the initial setup procedures. The manual is transferred from a CD that

While it may be out of the price range of many people, it has everything. If the size does not throw you off, this is a laptop that fills an important niche.

you insert during setup. The online manual is detailed, easy-to-use, and always available (or as long my your computer in working).

While may be out of the price range of many people, it has everything. If the size does not throw you off, this is a Japtop that fills an

important niche. Many people have been dreaming of a computer with these features and now it is here.

The limited watranty from Panasonic is for three years parts and labor and includes free includes highly included the parts of the part

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RESOURCES:

Panasonic CF-62, \$5699
Panasonic Personal Computer Co.
2 Panasonic Way Panazip 7D 6
Secaucus, NJ 07094
1-800-662-3537

Solutions .

Telecommuting continued from page 100

school, to a strong urge to work on one particular project instead of another.

Organizations that reported the most success and satisfaction with telecommuting tended is be the same ones is which management expressed particular willingness to adjust both day-to day and long-term business procedures to meet changing accessity or to gain advantage Generally speaking the greater the organizations proclevity to "study" a situation or tested making reasonable changes, the less success and satisfaction it obtains from its telecommuters

Good Screening Procedures

Although working successfully as a telecommuter is not particularly difficult, organizations that field a flock of successful telecommuters are generally those that require some preliminary screening of applicants for telecommuting privileges.

These companies tend to screen their

employees two different ways. First, they screen individuals to make sure they have the temperament and monutation to succeed as a telecommuter, second, they screen employment positions to make sure they involve enough regularly recurring teals that the reasonably be done on a telecommuting basis.

Although I'm not aware of any formal profile of the temperament and mouvation of a successful telecommuter now in existence, certain skills and traits are clearly needed for success at telecommuting At a minimum, these include the ability to work independently, the ability to plan as least a few days in advance,

the ability to communicate clearly, and a strong desire to succeed.

As technology changes and improves, the types of work that was successfully be done at elecommuters continue to expand Basicall, any work that requires the individual on physically be at a certain location is presently out of bounds, and will probably remain so for the foreseeable future. But any work that can reasonably be accomplished without retrence to where you do it is well within the bounds of what telecommuters can accomplish As arm mum, this includes most forms of thinking reading, writing, planning, analyzing, computer

Companies most satisfied and successful with this new way of working tend to be those that consistently evaluate telecommuters' performance on the basis of written, specific objectives.

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Telecommuting continued

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. Training Un Basic Skills And Techniques

Working as ■ telecommuter is not difficult. But there are some useful skills and techniques a new telecommuter may take a while to stumble upon or develop. Training can dramatically shorten this learning cycle and help a new telecommuter hit the ground running.

The most useful training topics generally include project planning, time management, and interpersonal communications Telecommuters also benefit from training in how to use any specific technology-like communicating computers or fax devicesthey don't already use in the central office.

Some of the same training also proves valuable for those who will begin supervising telecommuters.

Telecommuting Cuts Into Real Estate Demand

It has been obvious to many people for a long time that the trend toward telecommuting is reducing the need for office space among employers who embrace this new way of working

For example, if just half your workforce telecommutes just one day a week, you've just reduced your need for office space, utilities, parking, and all the rest by 10%. And that savings falls right to the bottom line. Estimates are that 2-3 million individual offices or cubicles that would have been occupied today are now either empty, or unbuilt, because of the trend toward telecommuting. Within the next decade, that number may double

But there are other, more subtle ways in which the trend toward telecommuting is likely. to hurt real estate values in the future

First, the tools of mahnology are reducing the work of support staff like secretaries and couriers. Consider a typical office with a supervisor or manager, six or eight professional or whitecollar specialists, and two or three secretaries. A few years ago, there would have been twice 45 many secretaries. But let's consider only the present and future. As the professionads or specialists continue changing their ways of working, they generally make more frequent use of word processing scanners for moderns, circulvoice mail, computer networks, computerized 204 MICROTIMES - MARCH 5 199

file transfers, and the like. The more they do thus, the less they need secretaries and others to help them. Within five years, those two or three secretaries will likely be reduced to just one.

This trend, repeated in every work group, every department, and every division of every organization, gets translated not only into fewer people doing the support work, but into smaller spaces being allocated to people in these positions. The result, me both counts, is much less need for square footage in the typical central office.

In addition, these same tools of telecommuting are being used to facilitate new approach to retailing. Stores need less space for inventory today because they can use the new tools to

An important trait for almost EVERY business nearly all the time, flexibility becomes particularly important when conventional employees become telecommuters and begin functioning outside the relatively controlled conditions of the central office.

better track and analyze their patterns of product sales. Wal-Mart and Home Depot are among the pioneers in this area. Success ## predicting demand for product, in turn, allows for smaller inventones of slow-moving items and "just in time" re-ordering of the big selfers. In the future, when a greater volume of retail sales are handled over the Internet instead of in person, inventory levels will drop even further because these orders can be shipped from a few centralized warehouses rather than from many fully-stocked stores conveniently located in every target community.

The manufacturers who supply these retailers are also requiring less real estate, for at least three reasons. First, they can produce and ship. goods more quickly when and whem needed, they don't need to warehouse so many finished goods to meet orders. Second, the trend toward smaller-sized products for telecommuters' home offices further reduces the amount of real

estate needed for fabrication and storage of these products. Third, manufacturers can insst on "just in time" deliveries of raw materials and sub-assemblies from their suppliers, thus reducing their own need for large stockpiles to keep their factories humming.

Between manufacturers and retailers he the distributors, who need less real estate primarily because they can now survive with smaller warehouses. On the inbound side, distributors can count on receiving replacement goods from the factories as quickly an their inventories drawn down. On the outbound side, distributors can hook their inventory systems to their customers', and thus anticipate and project future orders based on current and past sales

Another area where real estate demand # declining, and will continue to do so is retail banking. Telecommuters are among the prime candldates for online banking services Since an automated back-office facility can serve tens or even hundreds of thousands of banking customers from a relatively low-rent district this trend is going in decimate the need to own of rent the property now used for local community branch offices.

As the number of telecommuters increases toward the projected 20-25 million by the year 2000, the impact on the \$3.3 trillion commercial real estate market is likely to be profound According to Barry Libert, managing director of Arthur Andersen's Real Estate Transformation Group, office space occupancy is already don't

to the same levels we saw around 1970. Libert

says a telecommuting-induced drop in real

estate revenues of 10-20% could cut commet

cial real estate values by one-fourth' You may not think this is important, but real estate is at the center of about 20% of the US Gross Domestic Product, and about # of all US wealth. Anything that changes the tradition al growth patterns of real estate usage and value will profoundly affect an all.

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But because OS/2 has practically no documentation on PCMCIA installation and configuration, when problems occur, no explanation, or help, are available to resolve them.

Those IRKSOME IRQs Again

COM.SYS assigns logical communication ports COM1-4 to physical serial ports at four addresses: 3F8, 2F8, 3E8 and 2E8. At boot time, it checks these addresses in this sequence and sets the first serial port it finds as COM1, the second as COM2 and so on, with IRQ allocation as

8F8: COMI/IRQ4 (standard)

2F8: COM2/IRQ8 (standard)

3E8: COMS/any free IRQ (no standard)

2E8: COMWany free IRQ (no standard)

This can result in problems that confuse and frustrate users to no end.

For example, when a PCMCIA modern is added to a system with two serial ports, one of which is disabled, P&P recognizes the card, but shows the following under Assigned

Status> Error JRQ ETTOT > 8

A conflict on IBQ3 is counterintuitive: the point of disabling the port is to release its resources (address and IRQ) for the PCMCIA modem (see text)

But Warp4's Hardware Manager and the older RMVIEW program show the resources still used. Moreover, if you use AUTOUTL2 to change the IRQ setting for Modern Card 2F8 from IRQS to a free one, P&P will show an error at address 2F8. This indicates that disabling the

If you realize this (which is not obvious) and know of AUTOUTL2 (which is undocumented), the solution is to configure the card at the next available address, 9ES, with a free IRQ, say, 5 (see text). This will resolve the conflict, but you may not notice that a port "shift" has occurred: P&P shows the card as COM2, not—as you would expect at 3PS—COM300

Such shifts are caused by the way in which COM SYS assigns COM port numbers. The second physical port it finds (in this case, the card) will be COM2, at whatever address it is Note that the shift allows communication programs set for COM2 to now use the card, as intended. On the other hand, you now have a nonstandard COM2 and some programs, particularly DOSAYDM ones, may still need to be reset for the nonstandard address and IEQ (and

You can prevent the shuft by changing the COM setting in the script for Modem Card SES from 0xFF (yackh' a means dynamic assignment) to 3 (Pigure 3). P&P will show the card as COMS, but now all the programs must be reset anyway, defeating the purpose of disabling

to it (some DOS/VDM programs may require the specification of the new IRQ to work).

The procedure for resolving the IRQ conflict when one system port is disabled is similar, if trickier (see sidebar).

For the handful of supported nonmodes cards, the default I/O address and IRQ can also be changed the same way. Cards not explicitly supported may or may not be recognized As in the PCMCIA hardware case. But may be equivalent to one in the list or you may be able to modify an existing script directly, or write a new one for it. But cards must be recognized before they can be configured.

Conclusion

A configuration problem is ensured for modern cards on two-port systems (configuration failur if both ports = enabled and a conflict on IRO if COM2 in disabled). But because OS/2 has practically no documentation on PCMCIA installation and configuration, when problems occur, no explanation, or help, are available to resolve them. As one user commented:

"I did " 'HELP' [search], but found no men tion of AUTOUTL2.EXE there.... Lack of documentation for configuring Plug 'n' Play for PCM CIA is a disappointing slipup from IBM."

If you install PCMCIA on an OS/2 system with two serial ports, don't disable any of them Use AUTOUTL2 as described m this article to ensure proper card configuration for supported cards. For PCMCIA hardware and nonmodem cards not explicitly supported, trial and emol may help, but you are basically on your own

Sadly, the competition is even worse NI fers from equal lack of documentation and despite the application of a hot fix, I have rol been able to make PCMCIA work with it rel However, if you go through the mouble in OSP and manage to make PCMCIA work, you at least get true P&P, that is, hot insertions of cards M does not support this feature at this time

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Solutions

Accounting continued from page 92

It is important to realize that the tax treatment of acquired how is disfavored. Its cost in generally depreciated quite slowly—nifteen years.

Where Do We Ca From Here?

As noted earlier, the applicability of the proposed regulation is a rently limited to esoteric software transactions such as those involved tax treatise, foreign deferred compensation plans, certain foreign trusts, and foreign personal holding companies.

But given the general confusion in characterizing software transtions by current standards, these proposals are probably a harbing of things to come in the broader universe of code tax. We still inclear guidance for classifying many ordinary and routine softwal transactions. It's hard to believe that the IRS would develop a softwaclassification scheme for such obscure activities while leaving the reof us groping in the dark.

The regulations are not complex, as far as tax regulations go A cet trail thrust is an attempt to impose consistency and economic real especially when compared with the uncertainty and confusion of the current taxing regime.

Should such rules eventually find their way to general adoption income and employment we purposes, the change might have any ginal downside for the computer industry. To the extent that the rule limit software developers' opportunities as take aggressive position while playing the "audit lottery," it would not be favorable Curre ambiguities allow some to profit by loose interpretations. But low extent that the rules add clarity and certainty we will be be picture. Its has to object; the rules would make tax planning easier and more seriam.

Either way, these proposals suggest the bird's eye view of who direction Treasury a leading us and their line of legal reasoning as the IRS's evolving effort to understand and tax computer softward transactions.

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Solutions

The Making of continued from page 94

spoke with seemed genuinely interested in making Yahoo! as up-to-the-minute as it could be

Your placement in these search engines me critical. Unless it's near the top, you lose; very few people have the patience to search a list more than a few pages deep.

What's the trick to great placement? Don't know, because the rules are changing. Search engines used to look for simple things, like the number of occurrences of a word or phrase that described the site. But people started abusing this by putting hundreds—or thousands—of occurrences of key words in the HTML metatag field.

Worse, though, people started using popularly searched words that had nothing to do with their site! (Like, "Travel Services Sex Sex Airplane Sex Sex" and so on.)

So search engine companies = a getting smart. They're not teiling the public how they prioritize sites, but instead using "secret" techniques, like just using the first twenty-five words on your home page. In fact, there's even a rumor going around that if you "spam," that is, have too many occurrences of a particular phrase, that certain search engines will drop you completely.

Since all search engines are different, optimizing for one may mean getting disqualified by another. My advice is not to think of tweety important process as a one-shot deal. Visit the popular search engines every week to check, my your placement. Tune and tweak as necessary, It may seem like an unnecessary burden, but remember the "Golden Rule" of laternet markening.

"Those that get the most visits for the least amount win."

Just Make Sure They Spell Your Name Correctly

Speaking of getting people to an arte, don't lorget to write a concise, to the point press release risk. I your service as product to a of an art. I work and to before it will use with leavening as yourself as that presson. I at his discretanty as a source of the presson. I at his discretanty as a source of the presson. I at his discretanty as a source of the presson.

- It is however, a necessary activity life the Golden Rule in an allowing
- in fact, well-crafted press release could

pull more customers to your site than an advertisement. Now that's a golden top. Can you imagine how much Microsoft or Netscape would have to pay if they were charged every time their names were mentioned fust in print alone, Netscape probably gets \$1 billion in 'free advertising,' while Microsoft probably tops \$3 billion'.

If you're not familiar with writing—or sending out—pres releases, just go to http://www.businesswife.com and start reading various press releases in your area of business. Then, "Imitate" (sounds better than "copy," doesn't it?) the tone and structure of the ones you think are most effective.

For initiation fees and a couple hundred dollars—money well spent—PR
Newswire or BusinessWire will be able—to handle releasing your press statement to a wide publishing audience. (If you belong to the Software Forum, you'll even get your PR
Newswire's initiation fee waived.)

Here im a few quick press release items to remember: Keep paragraphs short and readable. Intersperse quotes when you can Igood to get im outsider im quote, too). Make sure the title is short but tells what makes your site important. Make sure word company name is the first word in the title. Make sure that you put your URL in the first paragraph of the press release. And only do press releases on things people will think are newsworthy. (I know Microsoft turns out a press release every time.

Your placement in these search engines is critical: Unless it's near the top, YOU LOSE; very few people have the patience to search a list more than a few pages deep.

Bill sneezes, but it just doesn't work for the rest of us this way.)

Next month, we'll discuss hardware setups, advertising, and all those other things that will make your electronic business boom to the moon.

Copyright © 1997 by Royal P. Farros All rights reserved. This series of articles is chronicling the ups & downs of a new internet business. You can visit IPrint, Inc. at http://www.liprint.com and email Royal at larnos@print.com.

Since all search engines are different, optimizing for one may mean getting disqualified by another. **My advice** is not to think of this very important process as a one-shot deal: Visit the popular search engines every week to check on your placement.



Computer Systems







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It's really amazing to watch that process in people start to really understand the Internet, as they start to use it themselves

All I say is that sometimes it's analogous to the ability to read im write. You've got lots of people producing great magazines and books, but nobody knows how iii read. So they can't possibly consume that content, and they can't possibly understand how you could make money selling books, because they don't see the inherent value.

So we have to go okay, back, undercut, undercut-what are we really doing here? Well, we have to educate people on the Internet, that's what it comes down to. We see that an the primary focus of the company-bring people on it, educate them constantly, help them to understand the roots of the Internet, all the way up through how to use a Netscape Plug-in.

So currently you've got numerous POPs in the US and Canada. You have a largely English-speaking clientele that's therefore relatively easy to support. But you call yourself EarthLink, so at what point do you same global expansion-and dealing with localization problems?

It's an important area, obviously, to get everybody on the Internet globally. We haven't really announced what our plans are outside the US and Canada-the same job needs to be done, but in the other hand I think it's very important to remain focused.

Our strategy is as much about knowing what and we don't do as knowing what we do, and we have to often put the blinders on. When opportunities popping up all over the place, many of which would be great businesses, we just stay tunnel-vision focused mu this one business.

That has allowed us to do well and not get distracted. Other companies that have not been m fortunate have scattered their focus over a number of market segments, including going international too early. You want in make sure you have a good core vision before you do something like that.

Do you think the window of apportunity is closed to im an ISP startup?

Not at all. I don't think so at all. I encourage anybody who has a lot of energy and intelligence and a good understanding of what it's like to get on the Internet me get into this business. Don't go up against, you know, us necessarily |laughs| Or AT&T! "I'm going up against the Death

[laughter] Right. The Death Star has its own weakness. If you fire that proton torpedo into that vent, it'll go down... I just saw Star Wars again last night. It was great.

There's much you can do in your local area. Providing connections to local businesses. working with people, providing seminars, providing Web hosting, Web page creation.

People sometimes try to consume the forest and not the trees, and there's a lot of value in some of those trees. You man just pick one It's a nice good business, and you can grow it. You can have a couple dozen staff and do quite well

I encourage anybody that wants to get into this business to do it, because we need it in this stage of the Internet's growth. We don't need consolidation and merger-mania and thirty survivors. We need thousands and thousands of people and companies at a grassroots level, mobilizing to get the Internet into our communities. That's what it's truly going to take, and I believe that will happen.



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Calendar Of Events

Conferences, Shows, Special Events

March

March | Computer Marketplace. Sherman Square Entertainment Center, Reseda. National Productions. Contact: 1-800-800-5600.

March 1 Computer Super Shows. The Chatsworth Marketplace. Super Show Productions. Contact: (714)459-6105.

March 2 Computer Marketplace. Sequoia Conference Center. Buena Park. National Productions. Contact: 1-800-800-5600

March 2-6 Object World East. Boston, MA. Contact: (617)433-1830, or URL: http://www.ow.com. March 8-11 1997 SXSW Multimedia/Interactive Festival. Austin, TX. Contact: xxsw@xxsw.com.

Festival, Austin, TX. Contact: xxsw@sxsu.com. or URL. http:///www.xxsu.com. March 8-9 Computer Marketplace, Henderson Convention Center, Las Vegas National

Productions. Contact: 1-800-800-5600.

March 8-9 Computer Super Shows. Glendale
Civic Auditorium. Super Show Productions.
Contact: (7)4)459-6105

March 10-14 Fourth Annual Internet World '97. Los Angeles Contact: 1-800-632-5537, or URL: http://events.tworld.com.

March 15-16 Computer Marketplace, Fairplex Expo Center, Pomona, National Productions Contact: 1-800-809-5600

March 17-19 Asia/Pacific Business Outlook 1997. Los Angeles Contact (213)740-7132

March 18-20 Internet And Electronic Commerce Conference And Expo. New York. NY Contact (203)256-4700. teceexpocon.com. or URL: http://www.expocon.com/iec.

March 18-22 Technology and Persons with Disabilities. Los Angeles. Center on Disabilities. California Stare University. Northindge. Contact: (818)677-2578. LTMG-CSUN-EDU. ... URL: 218 MCRCTIMES - MARCH 5. MET.

MARCH 15-16

Computer Marketplace

Produced by National Productions, inc., for over fourteen years, Computer Marketplace covers 100,000 square feet with over 300 exhibits featuring multimedia systems, notebook computers, software titles, modems, and other peripherals at discount pricing. Open 10-5 pm, admission 98. For more information, call 4-800-800-5600, URL: http://www.computermarketplace.com or email us at CMPilstBaol.com.

Fifth Annual Fractal Design Digital
Art and Design Contact

Art and Design Contest Fractal Design has announced the theme to its 1997 Digital Art and Design Contest: "Beyond the Canvas" As this is the first contest since Fractal Design's merger with Ray Dream, both 2-D and 3-D computer art will be considered. All entries must be created using Fractal products alone or Fractal products in combination with other graphics packages. Art will be graded by mil independent panel of distinguished Judges and prizes will be awarded In the following six categories: Fine Art 2-D, Fine Art 3-D, Commercial Illustration 2-D. Commercial Illustration 3-D. Animation and Web Page/Interactive Game Design. A separate category will be open to entrants 18 years and younger. The Grand Prize winner will be awarded a trip for two to Paris, Rome, Amsterdam, or Prague; runner-ups will receive hardware software prizes The deadline for entries is July 31, 1997, and winners will be announced in early October during the San Francisco Seybold trade show. For more information, contact Fractal Design at PO. Box 66959, Scotts Valley, CA 95067-6959, (408)430-4000, or URL: http://www.fractal.com/

http://www.csun.edu/cod

March 22 Computer Marketplace. Earl Warren Showgrounds, Santa Barbara. National Productions. Contact: 1-800-800-5600.

March 22–23 Computer Super Shows. O.C. County Fairgrounds. Super Show Productions Contact: (714)459-6105.

March 23 ACP Computer Swap Meet, Santa Ana. ACP Superstore. Contact: (74)558-8813 March 25-27 Communication Design Engineering Conference, Washington, D.C Contact: (61)7821-9219, or cdee@exporeg.com. March 29-30 Computer Super Shows, Riverside Convention Center, Super Show Productions Contact: (74)493-6105.

April

April 5 Computer Marketplace, Sherman Square Entertainment Center, Reseda, National Productions, Contact: 1-800-800-5600. April | Computer Marketplace, Sequois Conference Center, Buena Park, National Productions. Contact: 1-800-800-5600. April 6 Computer Super Shows. San Bernardino Nat'l/Orange Show Fairgrounds. Super Show Productions. Contact: (714)459-6105. April 8-10 American Programmer Summit '97. Boston, MA. Contact: 1-800-888-1816, lovering @cutter.com , or URL: http://www.cutter.com April 8-10 EMA '97. Philadelphia, PA. Electronic Messaging Association. Contact: (703)524-5550, meet@ema.org, or URL: http://www.ema.org April 9-11 Folio: West. Los Angeles. Contact

April 12 Computer Super Shows The Chatsworth Marketplace. Super Show Productions Contact (714459-6165 April 12-13 Computer Marketplace. Henderson Convention Center, Las Vegas, National Productions Conject-1-800-690-5600

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March 15-16 Sat. & Sun.

POMONA Fairplex Expo Complex (LA Fairgrounds)

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April 26, 27 Computer Super Shows. Orange County Fairgrounds. Super Show Productions Contact: (714)459-6105.

April 30-May 2 Infobase '97, San Diego. Folio. Contact: 1-800-228-1091, URL: http://www.folio.com.

May

May 3 Computer Marketplace, Sherman Square Entertainment Center, Reseda, National Productions, Contact: 1-800-800-5600.

May 4 Computer Marketplace, Sequoia Conference Center, Buena Park, National Productions, Contact: 1-800-800-5600

May 6-8 On Demand Digital Printing and Publishing Conference, New York, Contact: (203)256-4700, ext. 119 or URL: http://www.expocon.com.

May 12-16 IFIP/IEEE International Symposium

Integrated Network Management '97 (IM '97).
San Diego, Contact Andrea Erickson, (301)913.
9338, ext. 341, aerickson@conference.com, or URL: http://www.uieee.org/comsoc/IM.

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suited to the demands of mevent like the Be-In What could be found on screen me the time was of common only a fraction of the mean in itself, but it managed me be a significant fraction.

The live aspects were not Gosney's only interest; as he stated. "It is also equally important, if not more important, that we have an archive of the event that remains we it's over."

The original idea behind the Digital Bei In was for a bunch of digital artists to bring all their gear and jam." There was no idea of webcasting the event—back then there was to Web! However, the experimental edge a unportant to the Beilin. Gosney admits that "The Beilin, will general, is always we overly ambitious event," and figures that whar's displayed there is at least a couple of years ahead of any viable or mass markets. Thus, last year for the Eighth Digital Beilin, the first significant steps towards webcasting the event were taken with a RealAudio leed and an aftering to post written reports and digital photographs on the Web site.

This year the plans were far grander, calling for three video feeds going to the site, plus But models are only models. The nitty-gritty details of actual production and execution are

EXECUTE THAT MODEL!

By all reports, the actual live event was extremely successful. At the webcast end, Graham Technologies' ability meter three video feeds simultaneously to one page without using plugins was most impressive and effective in conveying the essence of what me going me. You could select any stream to see and hear only the live stage performance, taped interviews with the assembled luminaries, or the "Blendo" channel of effects and magery projected in the performance space.

I particularly enjoyed seeing that the per-

problem was a procedural bottlenerk in the production process. This year, the problem resulted from a technical glitch in the offware used in upload the material, possibly caused by a corrupted file when a circuit blew, along with difficulties due to the users' lack of familiarity with a custom application, not to mention the standard production issues, such as how to handle different file formats.

The solution we more simple and tricky if you want to neteast and do so reliably, you must first design workable production process and test it. Set up all your equipment in advance and test it; thearse and test what you plan to do; have a back-up system tyes, and test that too!), and, as Gosney said with a laugh, "simplify," simplify, simplify, simplify,"

This is all very simple to write in plain lext and offline, but quite another thing to achieve using volunteers, on a shoestring budget, and in real time In-kind sponsorship and contributions certainly helped get a lot things done this year—but next year, being the Tenth Annual, Gosney plans a slignificant ramp-up of

both the live elements and the webcasting of the Digital Be-In
Sponsors are already being sought
and early planning has begun Itse
have goods, products or services
that would be helpful, please contact Michael Gosney at (415)7779901, by mail at PO Box 78067, San
Francisco, CA 94107, or va email at
mail@verbum.com. I dare say he
could even find a way to use cash

The concept of being able to make an end-run around the constrictions of the broadcasting system and present your own event to the public is mighty powerful one. I'M ALL FOR IT.

QuickTime VR panoramas of the "Virtual Altar Room" and an "Avatar Teleport" where both those at the event and those out mm the Net could mingle avataristically mm 3-D" virtual world." Occurring in both real and virtual space, a Voce chant ceremony united participants around the world.

The idea of posting stories about and photographs of a cevent almost as they were written and shot remained, and the MindMeld forums, a regular year-round feature of the Bello save, was also supposed as provide a place for participants to discuss some accordance of the participants and the supposed of the participants of the participants and the participants of t

Other things, however, were not so smooth, ironically what should have worked relatively easily, as I what the Internet is currently reasonably adept at transmitting, i.e. the posting of

words and still pictures, broke down totally for the second year in a row. The first year, the money.

To check out the archives from the past IND years, webfoot your way over to www.bein.com . The writing and photos are now up Once there, it's a little tricky to find your way around, and there's a slightly strange air of temporal dissonance with past, present and future tenses circling elements of the eventsbut those questions of interface design and attention to detail among those that Gosney intends to find solutions to through earlier planning and an expanded Budget Future plans include short downloadable video clips and scheduled streaming video of parts of the event. There will also be souvenirs of the event such as T-shirts and Stefan G.'s video available for purchase.

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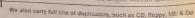
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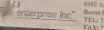
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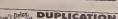
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DVORAK'S LAST COLUMN . BY JOHN C. DVORAK

Bonehead Ideas, Dumb Strategies And Dubious **Achievements**

Or, Dvorak's Grab Bag Of Memos

I haven't

jumped into the grab bag of late, and I notice a lot of items piled high with stories of horror and news you can abuse. Let's take a look

An email arrived from Kevin Anderson titled "Are the People at FujiFilm Using Rented Brains?" to wit:

I just bought a 2-pack of their Zip disks, and after tearing off the shrink-wrap, I got a weird surprise. They'd attached one of those tamperproof tape strips (just like you find on music CDs) to each Zip case. Now, anybody who's familiar with Zip disks knows that they hate dirt-just a little dirt is all you need to kill u disk or a drive. So why introduce a gooey strip of tape that's bound to leave 'tape boogers' in the worst possible place? (And what's the deal with the idea of a tamper-proof strip, anyway? Who's going to tamper with it besides me?) The clincher was the condition of the Zip disks themselvesthey were covered with dust particles (which I assumed were introduced during packaging). You can get away with this on regular floppiesbut you're asking for it with Zip disks. It's as if the Fuji bozas WANT their disks to fail!"

Hey, maybe they do! And thanks for introducing me to the term "tape boogers"- I needed that,

Now to something completely different. This letter comes from a youngster (I hope) named Carol K. who watches me on TV. The true TV generation. I left this letter unedited because if is just so coal! If I could write this X-gen style I'd be a rich dewd.

"Hehehe yea well I dont think my dad installed nuff memory... only a memory thingies more_yea. I if I wanted Warcraft. I could D.L. from here at this bbs_ this place roxs! My friend, that I am at skool and here.. Plebe had this to say bout Win,95 'It Sucksi' < to so heheheh Hey it's gret to know that a person to T.V. could write back to me., people who are an America Online 258 MICROTIMES . MARCH 5, 1987

said that they couldn't write back to me our my server wouldn't let them. But Mayb it's cuz I Use Telex. Hehehe 286 puter doesn't perform miricles. <G> Well, none do but atleast I can talk to people all around the U.S. Hey thankx fer ur advice. I was wondering somethin also. Is the Beavis&Butthead stuff good? Or Quake? Heheh I think I have been round puter fer too long. Like 12 yrs now. Hehehe If I would of been interested in how the puters worked and how to install stuff_ I would b a great puter person.. but hey. I really don't think that a 4 yr old could not of had such un extended vocabulary. Do you?"

Uh, ok! U'r raw puter babe.

Jay Johnson, meanwhile, has a tip:

"I'd like to share a Web site with you that I have had a positive experience with It's www.icdchess.com . Anybody looking to buy chess equipment needs to look here. I was looking for a nice wooden set, but the stores I've been in were way too expensive. I did an Internet search, then explored five sites before I went to icachess ICDChess has a nice online catalog with low prices listed and nice color JPGs. I placed my order offline, received my order 3 days later and um very pleased. I recommend this site for chess players. Thank you."

This is the kind of mail I usually get. Meanwhile, Greg Moore and

"I thought I'd share a thought with you about OS/2 in light of Caldera's recent decision to post the source code to DR-DOS. IBM should seriously think about releasing the source of OS/2 to users. Since OS/2 is beginning to take on a cult following. the OS/2 gang, much like the LINUX gang, could help OS/2 thrive and in fact perhaps get better from their feed-back. To stop the Wintel hegemony IBM and others have to think creatively. Opening OS/2 to their users, allowing them to review the code, find bugs, suggest fixes and improvements, IBM could gain a few points over Microsoft."

Give everything away! Yay! My pal Mike Anderson spotted this scam-a

goodle

"A friend who is a retired police captain forwarded this on to me. I thought I would give you a heads-up in the event you are carrying a pager. This scam has already hit Denver! Note: Area code 809 covers a number of Caribbean islands. I received a page on my wife's pager and returned the call After listening for a couple of seconds to the recorded message, I immediately hung up. I called my wife to see if she was playing a joke and discovered the following: There is a pager scam going on right now Someone is sending pages to get folks to dial a # that costs \$25 just to dial. There is no warning so we had better get the news out to everyone ASAP. The number is an 809 area code number.

Don't you just love creative people?

Finally, Carl Burnett gripes about DVD in a new way for a new reason. I think he's stumbled on to something.

I just got my copy of DV Magazine and there is an excellent article concerning DVD. After reading this article, which outlines most of the major stumbling blocks. I've come to the conclusion that DVD won't pass the consumers' 'common sense' test. The copy protection scheme is flawed.

"Imagine this-I have my DSS dish hooked up or my PCS phone to my 'Movie' provider or my cable modem to a DVD-ROM. I record one of the 'digital quality' movies for my collection

The current copy protection won't allow me in playback movies because the 'public' movies won't carry the encoded code on the disc for the DVD player to play it back. Hence, I can copy a movie for my own viewing like audio disc but can't play it back on a DVD player unless I 'pw' chase the DVD Disk with the encoded copy protection code.

"This scheme will doom DVD once John Q Public finds this out. Ergo-DVD is dead! I'm looking into this one!

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